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The Week

IF Lloyd George and Giolitti are really out for peace with Russia, events of the week have given them every reason to go on. The Premiers had objected to Soviet insistence upon the creation of a "so-called civil army to be drawn from one class" in Poland. Mr. Balfour sent a note to Moscow. Did the Soviet Government intend to adhere to its conditions? He asked for an answer by Friday evening. The answer came on Thursday. The Soviet Government, this reply declared, "will not insist upon the clause referring to the arming in Poland of a workers' civic militia." That clause was the single one to which the two Premiers had specifically taken exception. But the Soviet note went on to say, "we never considered our terms as an ultimatum and are still, as we have been all the time, ready to discuss them with the Polish Government with whom alone we are treating for peace."

IT is the White Knight's move. And obviously Lloyd George will need to move promptly and decisively or he will find the French ahead of him. We have ourselves, via a State Department note, "expressed the hope" that the Polish Government will find it "agreeable" to abstain from territorial aggression against Russia. No Polish reply has been received. But Marshal Pilsudski declares it would be folly "to halt on the Eastern front and maintain a solely defensive attitude." What is better is to march ahead "to complete destruction of the enemy." Meantime the ever practical French have told the Poles to get the best strategic front they can, regardless of ethnographic qualms of conscience. And at Minsk the Polish delegates flatly reject the Soviet peace terms—not alone the one to which Lloyd George objected, but all of them without favoritism to any one particularly.

NOT without a protest will the President let Lloyd George call him inconsistent in respect to Russia. Most of the Washington correspondents agree about that. "There will be echoes of Lloyd George's charge," wires Mr. Michelson to the World, "that President Wilson was inconsistent in refusing to treat with the Soviet Government now, after having favored the Prinkipo conference." Mr. George's slur was "gravely discussed" by the Cabinet, and our Ambassador in England is on his way to ask some questions. The Times explains, unofficially, the attitude of the administration. In the case of Prinkipo—"President Wilson was willing to join with the representatives of the other powers to bring the Russian factions together—Bolsheviki and anti-Bolsheviki—in the hope that they would be induced to settle their differences among themselves and re-establish a united Russia which would be able to enter into relations with the rest of the world." And now—? Well, the

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anti-Bolsheviki have disappeared—save for General Baron Wrangel—and that seems to settle it. There are no longer any factions . . . we wanted a reunited Russia . . . we have it. . . . At this point the argument leaves the track. Our new policy may be for better or worse. Not many people will be impressed by the claim that it is consistent.

GENERAL BARON WRANGEL'S latest captures in the South of Russia, announced in a cable to the World, include 6,000 prisoners, 30 guns and 100 machine guns. Regularly during the last two months such reports of Wrangel's captures have been coming in. No single report has made excessive claims; but the total captures, should you take the trouble to add them, make a most impressive figure. We have looked back through the files of the New York Times; they show that from various sources there have been reported in Wrangel's behalf—since the 13th of June—captures amounting to 58,000 men, 1,173 guns and 12 armored trains. 58,000 prisoners is more than the whole Soviet army in the south was reported to muster a few days ago. If Wrangel keeps on at his present rate we may yet have the American government inviting the Soviets into conference. For Wrangel will have disunited Russia, and a consistent American policy will require a conference among the various Russian factions to put it together again.

KOLCHAK was a greater menace to Soviet power than Korniloff; Denikin was a greater menace still; and now Wrangel begins to take his place as the greatest menace ever. "General Wrangel is the most serious danger that has confronted the Soviets," some unnamed French officer tells a correspondent of the Times. And of his own accord the correspondent adds: "Just how General Wrangel is winning the sympathy of even the most independent elements of the Russian people is seen by the following terms of the agreement he has recently concluded with the Cossacks of Don, Terek and Astrakhan." Consider a few of these terms: All foreign agreements, both political and economic, are to be "negotiated and concluded by the Commander in Chief." All railroad and telegraphic communication is "intrusted to the authorities under control of the Commander in Chief." All right to issue currency is "vested in the Commander in Chief." The Commander in Chief, in short, seems to have done fairly well for himself. There ought to be a chart to show the way in which his program wins the support of "the most independent elements of the Russian people."

MEETING Governor Cox's charges of a vast campaign fund, spokesmen for the Republican party take several different tacks. In the first place they point out that instead of fifteen million or eight million, actually only a little more than one million dollars has been *collected* and the party has had to borrow money. This means very little. The accepted rule in American politics is to go ahead with obligations and look to the collections later. A million collected by the end of August is a substantial piece of work. In the second place, the Republican treasurer points out that Mr. Cox doesn't "know the difference between a quota and a budget." A quota, it seems, is a dream—something you hope to get, but don't expect to. There's a difference, certainly. Still, what the Republican leaders hope to get is more or less indicative of the sort of campaign they hope to run. Finally, there seems to be some distinction made between expenses national, state and local. This distinction is all right in theory. In practice money is money and votes are votes.

WHETHER Governor Cox "proved" as much as he set out to prove, and whether eight million or fifteen million is a legitimate campaign sum, does not matter immensely. The Republican leaders themselves have admitted budgets and quotas of a size sufficient to disgust most independent voters. What the present controversy has contributed to previous knowledge is chiefly more light upon the method by which Republican funds are being raised. "Harding and Coolidge," says a letter from headquarters, "have the confidence of the people; but, boys, get the money!" "The platform is sound enough to hold the weight of the nation; but, boys get the money!" Now is the time for all good citizens to come to the defense of their country. "Senator Harding's election involves just a few of the simplest principles of salesmanship." Boys, get the money.

IT is easy enough to say that these unhappy phrases come from the pen of a subordinate, and that they in no way involve the management of the campaign as a whole. The fact of the matter, in our opinion, is that slogans such as "Boys, get the money" are the inevitable result of the sort of organization Mr. Hays has built for the Republican party. Mr. Hays did not originate the idea of vast campaign funds. He had good precedents for that. What he did do, was to regularize the system and expand it. The Republican leaders imitate the modern merchant with his "scientific" technique. Vast organization, vast advertising, "the psycho-

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logical approach," vast expenditures, and a made-to-order interest in the product—in the sense in which business men employ the term today the Republicans are "selling" a President to the country.

NEXT week the voters of five New York election districts will have a chance to register their faith in the processes of representative government at Albany. On Wednesday the five duly elected Socialist Assemblymen who were expelled last April from the Legislature, come before their constituents and ask for reelection. The Democrats and Republicans, forgetting for the moment the chasm which divides them when ordinarily they address the voters, have effected fusion against all five Socialists. In the face of this handicap it will not be easy to send the ousted Assemblymen back to Albany. But the special election gives the voters of a few districts an opportunity to uphold or repudiate the action of the State Assembly. The referendum should be on a wider basis. Only a small portion of the progressive voters of the state live in the five districts immediately concerned. Whatever happens to the Socialists next Wednesday, progressive voters throughout the state will have their chance in November. They can vote against every candidate who had a share in the coup d'etat in April.

AFTER nearly three years of determined struggle the New York Call has won its fight for a restoration of the second-class mailing privileges. Mr. Burleson denied those privileges, and a piously democratic administration sustained him in his action. The course followed by the Postmaster General has been bureaucracy at its worst; for it has been cowardly bureaucracy. Mr. Burleson apparently lacked the courage to bring the editor of the Call into court and charge him with "sedition." He worked indirectly. Denying second-class mailing privileges was a blow at the paper's income, and it came near being a mortal one. What Mr. Burleson assumed was this: that the Espionage act gave him power to issue a blanket order operating in future upon copies of a publication not yet in existence. No assumption is more dangerous to democratic principle; and Mr. Justice Hitz of the District of Columbia Supreme Court, denies that the assumption has a legal basis. His opinion is clear and unequivocal. Mr. Burleson is taken down a peg. If he now carries his case to the federal Supreme Court he will take action in which all partisans of American liberty have an interest.

IN an early issue we hope to publish an article from England, discussing the measure and character of independence which the British Government has agreed to recognize in Egypt. For the present we have only reports in the London Times to give us information, and those reports are so brief as to be almost cryptic. Great Britain, apparently, will still maintain at least one garrison in Egypt. And Egypt is to "recognize Great Britain's privileged position in the valley of the Nile and agree, in case of war, to afford every facility for access to Egyptian territory." There is to be a British High Commissioner in Egypt, with power to veto "legislation affecting foreigners." And Great Britain must be consulted in the business of making treaties. This is about all the information, none of it specific, with which London cables have supplied us.

"IT is not generally understood," reads a statement issued by the American Civil Liberties Union, "that the number of political and industrial prisoners in the United States, sentenced merely for the expression of opinion or membership in an organization, has been steadily increasing. There are many more convictions now under state and local laws than there were under federal law." Conviction is one thing, trial before conviction another. Whatever the offense charged in any instance, the political or industrial prisoner deserves a fair chance with any other prisoner to secure legal defense and to prepare his case. He needs bail, in other words; and he needs bail if he is to have an equal opportunity with other prisoners to secure release from long imprisonment during the pendency of appeals.

SURETY companies ordinarily refuse to go bail in the case of political prisoners; premiums are frequently beyond the means of the defendant; and it is to provide an entirely legitimate measure of protection that the American Civil Liberties Union is now proceeding to organize a national bail fund to serve in such cases. The management of this fund will be in the hands of a committee of trustees responsible for its administration. The risk involved to those who make the loans will not be great, the Civil Liberties Union asserts, since all subscribers "will share together any loss which might be entailed by the forfeiture of a bond. That would mean only a very slight risk for the individual, judging by the record so far in case of political prisoners. We know of only three bonds forfeited in the past three years, out of hundreds of cases." Not defense of any economic or political doctrine, but fair trial for every prisoner is what the Union hopes its bail fund may provide.

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FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION reports show that the coal operators of West Virginia and the jobbers who handle their output are not suffering heavily from the profiteering hand of labor. The Commission has compiled figures based upon information obtained from sixty-one operators in the West Virginia field. The average reported sales realization of these operators was $3.40 a ton. The average f. o. b. cost at the mine was $2.53. The margin therefore was 87 cents a ton. For this coal the Shipping Board has had to pay $20 a ton at Hampton Roads. Freight may add $2 to the price at the mine, and bring coal to Hampton Roads at about $5.40 a ton. Between $20 and $5.40 there is a substantial margin. Margin is not the same as profit, to be sure, since there are certain items such as selling expense and interest on borrowed capital which need to be deducted. Still, a neat profit must remain. Figures such as these are poor material with which to buck up the morale of labor.

THIS report of the Federal Trade Commission is particularly pertinent in view of the strike now threatening the coal industry. Representatives of 175,000 anthracite miners, assembled at Wilkes-Barre, on Sunday of last week, urged the President to accept the minority report of the commission appointed by him to make an award. That minority report provided for wage increases of 31 per cent. The majority report stopped with increases of from 17 to 20. The difference is substantial. In his reply to the miners the President does not contend that it is too generous. He rests his case on the fact, a convention of miners of Districts 1, 7 and 9 had "solemnly obligated the mine workers to abide by the award." "By all the laws of honor upon which civilization rests that pledge should be fulfilled."

WHAT is threatening in the situation, so far as a possible strike is concerned, is that the regularly constituted leaders of the Mine Workers have lost caste with their following. Is it any wonder? They have been flouted in their demands for an early consideration of the merits of the miners' demands, brought into court by injunctions of the federal government, accused by federal officers of being traitors to their country. Meantime the mine owners have made vast profits. If any body of workers had reason to believe their official leaders were impotent to secure them a fair hearing, those workers are the miners. It is perfectly proper to talk about laws of honor and abiding by an award. But now, at a time when confidence is badly needed, we may reap the reward of eight months' folly.

Cox and Harding

THAT Mr. Harding finds the business of thinking difficult is plain from his speech about the League. He suffers under a number of severe handicaps. He has never, for instance, mastered the English language. It is no question of style or grace or imaginative power. It is a question of using words to define ideas. Mr. Harding's words bubble and splash al around his thought, leaving the reader baffled. His intention eludes you in a spray of polysyllables and ambiguities. He is not only unable to say what he thinks, he seems at the same time not to know just what he thinks. The Senator apparently illustrates the claim of many psychologists that without language the mind cannot function.

His impediment of speech is aggravated by the conflicting interests in his own party. Somehow Mr. Harding has to reconcile views as divergent as those of Messrs. Taft, Johnson, and Lenroot. But that is not all. He has to reconcile his own votes for the League and Mr. Root's work for the League with a party position that will create a definite issue against the Democrats. All this is admitted and well understood. Mr. Harding shows signs of having worked fairly hard himself and of having listened to much advice as to how best to resolve the tangle.

His conclusion, after much "wiggling and wobbling" seems to be that the whole subject needs to be reconsidered afresh. He feels vaguely that there is something radically wrong with the settlement at Versailles, and something sinister in an executive committee of Allied Prime Ministers to govern the great affairs of the world. He has heard someone say that the core of the League is a group of politicians acting within the terms of the League when convenient, outside the League as allies when it suits them. He wants somehow somewhere in some way or other to establish an institutional procedure that will be superior to the political aims of a group of great Powers. He frankly does not know exactly what he wants; and consequently he does not know how to do it, and all that he is certain about on August 28th is that he will not accept the moral-legal obligations which he reads in the Covenant. But he does think that the Republicans after March 4th next would try hard. And behind it all there may be a plan of international organization worked out by Mr. Root, alluded to often but not yet described. Mr. Harding's speech may be the dim and confused anticipation of something worth the most unprejudiced and hospitable attention, for Mr. Root is no amateur in these matters, and the work he is undertaking at the culmination

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of his career will be a highly disinterested and sincere effort.

But whatever there is behind the speech the foreground leaves a good deal to be desired. It does not clarify anything, and it exposes Mr. Harding to the clever thrusts of skilled advocates like Mr. David Hunter Miller. Yet it does not contrast unfavorably with Mr. Cox's speech. That clever politician has so far done nothing but plump for the League without showing the faintest sign that he cares about it deeply or has thought about it much. It is easy to say "I'm for going in" and then to talk about campaign funds. It is easy to let one group of supporters grow enthusiastic about the League, while the candidate himself preserves a voluble silence about the essentials of the League. While the Governor sails blithely over the ground, never touching it, the Senator grubs about and perspires. Mr. Harding shows symptoms that the disease of thought has afflicted him, but Mr. Cox is in buoyant health.

The one struggles for an idea, muddled, not very much informed, groaning sincerely as he plods; the other, facile and effervescent goes bounding along, not knowing and not caring where he is going, but on his way. Neither of them pretends to a knowledge of the main facts in world politics, nor to a coherent view of America's mission. They are both politicians first, last and all the time. They differ in temperament and they are controlled by slightly different party demands. But as leaders of a country in time of hesitation, what Mr. Dooley said of two other candidates is true: They are as far apart as the two poles, and as much alike.

"A Test of the News": Some Criticisms

ENOUGH time has elapsed to reveal some of the principal objections raised by the study of Russian news published in our supplement of August 4th. The New York Times itself has not made comment, but many other papers have discussed the question at length, and there has been a large number of letters. They are a mixture of brickbats and bouquets—we shall confine ourselves to the brickbats.

Some of the comment makes no pretense of being critical. It is satisfied with eloquence. Thus the Knickerbocker Press (Albany) without bothering to question the accuracy of a single passage or burdening its readers with a bit of proof, asserts simply that—

> The New Republic's summary of the Times' dispatches during a period of several years amounts to no more than this—that the author of the criticism did not like the news that was printed or the headlines which were written for it—and what value there is in the New Republic's disapproval of the New York Times' dispatches from Russia and its headlines thereon that would warrant the publication of a forty-two page supplement is a matter as to which we await information without really expecting an answer. . . . It is possible that the Times' dispatches were incorrect, but it is not possible that the New Republic's opinion of them could amount to anything.

Somewhat more substantial, but no more tangible for the purpose of comparing views, is the argument founded in some measure upon misrepresentation. An editorial in the Richmond News Leader is a case in point. What are the standards of the test by which news in the Times was measured? According to this journal,

> . . . . The test was to be satisfied when it was shown that what the Times had said would happen, on the authority of those whom it quoted in its news columns, did not happen. If, for instance, the Times displayed prominently the predictions of Kerensky's continuance in power, or Korniloff's success, or Kolchak's victory and none of these things came to pass, then the Times was a liar, the radical press was vindicated and the time to subscribe to the New Republic was at hand.

This is silly. The New Republic had no intention of vindicating "the radical press." And lest such vindication even be implied, its supplement purposely declared (page 4):

> The authors do not wish to imply, because honestly they do not believe, that the less conservative press is necessarily more reliable.

You cannot argue with people who invite their readers to discredit you on the basis of ideas you specifically disown. Nor can you regard them as witnesses.

There is another group of critics whose comment, in part at least, can be squarely met. One of the most common criticisms which the New Republic's supplement has drawn is that it attached too much importance to the question of "prophecy." The New York Evening Post, for instance, asserted in the course of a friendly review that concerning Kolchak, Denikin and Yudenitch—

> a great deal of unintelligent and vicious optimism was fed out to the American public. And yet Kolchak did at one time have the Soviets in a tight place, as attested by their own desperate appeals; Denikin did come within striking distance of Moscow; Yudenitch did get perilously close to Petrograd. Suppose any of these strokes had succeeded? It must be the New Republic's contention that none of these attempts possibly could succeed and they should have been so reported; a fact which they have yet to prove.

Certainly we do not believe that to be our task.

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Our supplement did not contend and never should have contended that none of the anti-Soviet offensives could possibly succeed. Its point—a point established by one specific instance after another—was simply this: that when Kolchak, Denikin and Yudenitch were moving forward, they were always on the point of capturing Petrograd or Moscow; when they were retreating along the whole line, (if they got into the news at all) they were always about to make a fresh stand. That was the motif of the news and we objected to it. The Post continues:

> There was mighty little optimism in the news when Ludendorff in July, 1918, was fifty miles from Paris, yet a good deal more optimism would have been justified by the outcome.

Here, it seems to us, the Post has tangled its feet in its own metaphor and got the point just turned around. When Ludendorff was fifty miles from Paris there were no headlines in the Times declaring: "French Rule Totters as Ludendorff Wins"; but when Kolchak was twelve times as far away from Moscow there *were* headlines saying: "Red Rule Totters as Kolchak Wins."

The question of "prophecy"—and its accuracy or inaccuracy—is raised in other comments on the New Republic's supplement. Says the Mobile Register, summing up:

> In other words, the Times was not able to foresee events in a country wherein events have been and are being so beclouded as not to be discernible; or, at the least, it was not able to make prophecies fulfillable. Prophesying is difficult and often unsatisfactory.

And the New York Tribune asserts:

> No one has been able to formulate an altogether satisfactory definition of news. What is rated important by one man is not so rated by another. So it is inevitable for many to complain of the judgment of newspaper editors. But though there is no agreement as to what news is, there is general agreement as to what it is not.
>
> It is not prophecy. News deals with the present and the immediate past, and little with the future. Its raw material consists of events that have occurred. The newsman who becomes a prophet fails as prophets generally do. But when prediction is plainly presented as such no particular harm is done, for the sensible reader discounts its value and is not deceived.

That is true. But what of prediction, presented not "as such," but dressed in the guise of news? Concerning the willingness of Russia to fight on, in 1917, concerning the weakness of the Bolshevik position in the months before the revolution, the eagerness of "the Russian people" for Allied intervention and the hold which Kolchak and Denikin had upon the loyalty of the people whom they wished to lead, we believe the New Republic's supplement furnished scores of instances of mistaken prophecy *pretending to be news*.

The trouble is not that the reporters were bad prophets, but that they were bad reporters. They could not foresee what was going to happen because they took so little pains to explain what was happening. [illegible]ustration nearer home. There is an el[illegible]n and reporters are out to tell what is [illegible]uppose that a Republican paper ann[illegible]ter day that Georgia is aflame with [illegible]usiasm, and then when the test of elec[illegible]lace it turns out that Harding polled [illegible]significant Republican vote. Would y[illegible]epublican reporter in Georgia a bad [illegible] bad reporter? We should call him [illegible]er, and the more he explained how ca[illegible]s search for news he had confined him[illegible]ectable Georgia Republicans the wors[illegible] the figure he cut. A good reporter ma[illegible] a prophecy and go wrong. But he wi[illegible]ldle his own mind and the reader's by mi[illegible] what he sees with what he prophesies and both of them with what he hopes. The Times reporters, on the whole, did just that.

This brings us to the commonest and the most important argument—the argument about the frailty of human nature. Admitting that there is a substantial case against the reliability of the news, some critics point to the very human liability to error. There is no need to underestimate it. It is hard to report accurately with perspective and insight. It is particularly hard in the haste of daily newspaper work. Any one who doubts the difficulty ought to try it for a while himself.

But admitting the whole indictment against human nature, what is the moral? Is it that all is for the best in the best of all possible worlds, or is it that the frailty of human nature requires honest and persistent attention? Since human beings are poor witnesses, easily thrown off the scent, easily misled by a personal bias, profoundly influenced by their social environment, does it not follow that a constant testing of the news and a growing self-consciousness about the main sources of error is a necessary part of the democratic philosophy? The man who knows how the first Republican reporter in Georgia went wrong is not so likely to go wrong in the same way himself.

The process is nothing but the attempt to extract wisdom from experience, and the greater the indictment against the reliability of human witnesses, the more urgent is a constant testing, as objectively as possible, of these results. When you consider how profoundly dependent the modern world is upon its news, the frailty of human nature becomes

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an argument not for complacency and apology, but for eternal vigilance.

But none of this should be permitted to obscure the fact that there is a vast difference between innocent frailty and deliberate special pleading. From the period following the Brest-Litovsk peace to the present day the Russian news of the New York Times has been inspired by purposes utterly foreign to the business of reporting. Not incidentally, not accidently, but persistently the news has served a purpose which was not the truth which frail, but disinterested human nature could secure. It was news to serve the ends of a program of intervention and blockade. The argument from human nature does not set aside the inescapable verdict that the Times surrendered the fundamental tradition of good journalism by failing to resist the editorial invasion of its news columns. That touches the core of democracy, for without reliable and disinterested news, representative government is a farce.

We conclude with a sentence from the comment of the New York Tribune:

> The inquiry is practically narrowed to the single point of whether the dispatches (in the Times) accurately predicted the course of military events in Russia and foreshadowed the establishment of the Bolshevist power.

That statement, we believe, is plain misrepresentation. Military news had an important place in our study. But that study included also proof:

That the Red Peril was an insignificant item in the news until the end of the war with Germany, when it blossomed out overnight as a new cause for Allied intervention;

That Kolchak and Denikin were credited with a democracy which the Times' own correspondents later ridiculed;

That the Soviets were constantly pictured on the brink of a precipice—though they occasionally stopped tottering long enough to become suddenly a world-wide menace;

That when Polish troops were hundreds of miles deep in Russian soil (1919 and 1920), *news* dispatches in the Times pictured Russia as the aggressor; and

That essential passages in the Soviet replies to the Prinkipo and Nansen offers were somewhere suppressed, with the result that the notes assumed false character and continuation of the war was made to seem more plausible.

This material was the core of the supplement which we published. It is worth noting that not one newspaper comment which has reached us attempts seriously to challenge the validity of a single statement.

Ponzi's Dupes

RICH man, poor man, beggar man, thief; they appear all to be represented in the list of Ponzi's "investors." At first it was reported that the sufferers were just Ponzi's fellow aliens, hard working, thrifty, pathetically greedy, inspired by dazzling hope of immediate wealth, to finance a triumphant return to Italy, where homesteads and villas are still sold cheap for sound American dollars. That was calculated to move one to pity. But now we learn that Ponzi also drew into his net some rather fat specimens of respectability. That is different. We who did not happen to share in that dream, laugh or indulge in moral saws, according to our humor. Why? Of course we are altogether superior to that kind of dreaming, and if we were not, still in this case the awakening falls to the other fellow.

Consider how easy they were! An ignorant little alien, who could never, with the best of will, have made many honest dollars, a man who, as it turns out, has the handicap of a prison record behind him, presents himself with a plausible scheme for outwitting the Postal Department. And the public bites; proof positive of its imbecility. Oh come, let us be honest. Did not the scheme look reasonable to us all, at first? The Postal Department had been outwitting the foreigners, selling them money orders for lire worth six cents and charging them a trifle less than twenty. If the fluctuations in exchange could be worked to the disadvantage of the private person, there ought to be a method by which they could be worked the other way. All that seemed to be needed was ingenuity, and Ponzi certainly looked and acted as if he had that.

Was that trading in miracles? Not at all. Ever so many of us have seen aliens less prepossessing than Ponzi rise to dazzling wealth by working the public treasuries. There was Gulowitz, for example, who accidentally discovered early in the war that machine gun repair parts had not been cornered by anybody. He cornered them, and the East Side refers with pride to the times when he ate his chop at Schultz's and didn't mind the flies. There was Pontoppolo, who sold stale flowers on the streets until it occurred to him that the candy manufacturers held all the trumps under our not quite all seeing sugar control. There was MacPherson, raw from Scotland, who conceived that an abandoned tub in Erie Basin could carry oil for the Allies and insurance for himself. Talk about Ponzi's fifty per cent in ninety days. Why, any one of the three men we have named could have paid fifty per cent a week and still have got rich.

Relatively, Ponzi's promises looked moderate. Relatively, his scheme of operations seemed safe

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and sane. There was indeed a suspicion of crookedness in it, but who has ever required perfect virtue of finance? It is said that when John Law had expounded to the Regent of France his then novel plan of making state and people rich through the device of paper money, the devout Regent exclaimed fervently: "If you are sent by God, I welcome you; but if you come from the Devil, don't go away." That was three hundred years ago. The quality of the speculator's morality has not changed in the least since then.

But those who came later into Ponzi's net, the respectabilities, surely they must have realized that no business of millions could grow out of a narrow chink in the international postal regulations. They must have suspected that the source of the profits of present investors was the plunder of prospective investors. What of that, so long as the stream of victims kept swelling? All they needed to concern themselves with was the probability of the stream keeping up for another ninety days—or even thirty, for that matter. For could they not sell out at a premium at any time they chose? There was just one thing Ponzi's investors failed to take into account. That was the intervention of the government in their private enterprise. But was there reason for anticipating anything of the sort from a government that had stood patiently by while killings were made in almost imaginary marks and kronen and rubles week after week, while coal companies, woolen companies and steel companies were plucking the unwilling people more savagely than Ponzi ever pretended to pluck the government?

Ponzi's investors could explain themselves rationally if they would. Nevertheless, we must pronounce them sad dupes. They have been caught. We others, though we may have cast greedy eyes on easy money, are entitled to our laugh. We have not been caught. There is always such a jam around the entrance to the traps.

The Common Sense of Housing

IF there is a single national characteristic in which Americans excel, and in which as a rule they take pride in excelling, that is common sense. We try to know definitely and precisely what we want, and the shortest cut to it. We want to be comfortably warm in winter, and the shortest cut to comfortable warmth is the steam coil, unhallowed by the associations that crowd around the glowing hearth. We bid farewell to the associations, with no very poignant regret. We want abundant office room where the available building land is scarce and dear. Up goes the skyscraper; let the artists applaud or frown; it is all one. In our practical life we do not ask, Has this ever been done before; how has it been done? We ask, Do we want it; what is the quickest, cheapest, most practical way?

What we want in the matter of housing is easily defined. Every American family, and every alien family permitted by our laws to sojourn among us, ought to have reasonably easy access to housing accommodations satisfactory in respect of space, light and sanitation. In the early days of the republic the most practical method of meeting this requirement was to throw all the responsibility directly upon the individual. There were cheap building lots within walking distance of work and unlimited supplies of cheap building material. Any man who amounted to anything could acquire a home of his own. Then as now there were men who did not amount to anything, men who preferred to slink at night into any dark hole rather than make the sustained effort necessary to house themselves comfortably. They were the exceptions, the defective fringe of the species, fraying out toward extinction. Our institutions were not obliged to make provision for them.

It still remains a common sense policy in the villages and the open country to leave the responsibility for housing to the individual, with no other public interference than the fixing of minimum standards of sanitation and fire protection. That policy remains applicable still to considerable classes even in the great city. There is no reason for public concern over the housing prospects of those who have so short a working day that an hour or two daily spent on suburban trains can be accepted with philosophy, and who have sufficiently easy incomes to bear without hardship the successive advances in commutation rates that appear to be in prospect. "Own your own home" is still a rational injunction as applied to these classes. And to make home ownership attractive it still remains a rational policy to leave the widest practicable range to individual taste. It also remains a rational policy to assure perpetuity of tenure of land, that the burden of permanent improvements may be cheerfully borne.

But the great majority of our working population are no longer in condition to satisfy their housing requirements by the traditional method of self-help. They can not go long distances from their work; their margins of time and income are too slender. Home ownership is out of the question, for most of them, for the simple reason that land within easy distances is too dear. There might be a solution in the cooperative ownership of multiple dwellings, but that presupposes the presence of a spirit of cooperation which can not simply be evoked out of our old individualistic scheme of life, but can only be evolved with time.

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For the present our workers must live, for the most part, in rented quarters, either in buildings specially provided for them or in older structures made over to meet their requirements. Instead of providing himself with housing according to his taste, the worker buys it as he can afford it. And there has come to be disastrous discrepancy between what the worker can afford and what an enlightened community would insist upon as the minimum standards of decent housing. That discrepancy can not be dismissed as a transient condition of maladjustment, certain to yield to the operation of ordinary business motives. A congested slum is one of the very most permanent features of modern city life. The New York Reconstruction Commission has demonstrated statistically that the old, unsanitary tenements have a longer life ahead of them than almost any other class of buildings in New York City. We pull down our comfortable private dwellings to make room for apartment houses; we even demolish sky scrapers in order to erect others reaching still higher into the air, but we await the slow process of utter decay or the chance process of conflagration to deliver us from the rookeries in which we quarter our working population.

Why? Those rookeries yield a heavy revenue, a first charge against any project of reconstruction. But even so reconstruction would perhaps be practicable in many cases, if it could be undertaken on a sufficiently large scale. Last spring, a group of men connected with the Open Stairs housing projects made public an offer to take a slum block, pull down the present ramshackle buildings and replace them with sanitary buildings that would house the same population at the same rents, provided that the city, through the power of eminent domain or through purchase would place them in possession of the land. So far as we know, not a newspaper found enough of interest in the proposal to comment on it. It was a freak proposal, because the city could not exercise the right of eminent domain for such a purpose, and to acquire the land through purchase would open a terrible leak in the city treasury. It would not have been a freak proposal in London, where the public, when it chooses, takes slum property at its sites value for new construction.

But we are proposing nothing so drastic as the seizure by the public of housing property without fair compensation for actual value—not blackmail value nor speculative value, however. It will come to that, if housing conditions go from bad to worse, without limit, but we believe that it is not yet too late to mend our ways. First of all, we must make up our minds that urban housing—whether for residence or for business—is essentially a public function. The power of the city to expropriate land of compensation, and compensation only according to the rule of investment value.

Actual construction might then be undertaken by the city, or it might be carried on by private companies or by cooperative groups, under regulations as to quality of service and reasonable charges similar to those applicable to other public service enterprises. The essential point is that the legal recognition of the public service character of housing would open the way for the introduction of rational planning into what is now one of the most haphazard departments of life.

Say that it is proposed to erect buildings to house a great industry—as in the case of the clothing manufacture of the upper East Side in New York. The projectors might reasonably be called on to answer several questions. What about transportation; are we likely to have a great increase of traffic dumped into streets already congested? What about housing for the workers; are we simply to have two families growing where one grew before—and at that nearly perished for want of air?

Either we shall have cities in which work can be done efficiently and economically, and life can be lived healthfully and hopefully, or we shall have cities that are hives of exploitation and disease and disorder, a plague upon our American civilization. Drift and haphazard can give us only the city that becomes a more serious problem with the successive decades. Nothing but systematic planning will set us on the road toward real urban health. And city planning will come out of the domain of academic speculation only when the cities are granted the power to proceed to self-realization by whatever methods are most practical. If private enterprise will conduct efficiently the public service of housing under the conditions the public must lay down for its protection, good. Otherwise the public will have to devise its own appropriate means for meeting its requirements.

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Woodrow Wilson: A Tragedy

TO write with perfect impartiality about a statesman whose policies have won such active support and intense hostility as those of Woodrow Wilson is wholly impossible. To write about him honestly, eschewing all devices for establishing a seductive appearance of freedom from bias is difficult, but humanly possible. Professor Dodd has achieved this rare possibility. His book, Woodrow Wilson and His Work (Doubleday, Page & Co.) compels the reader's admiration for its candid good faith, as well as for its comprehensive mastery of the relevant material and the brilliancy of its execution. Although I am seldom in complete agreement with Professor Dodd, and often a horizon's distance away from him, I find myself forced to the conviction that this book offers the fullest and fairest account of Wilson and his work that I have seen, or am likely to see in many a day.

Professor Dodd is a warm personal friend and an ardent admirer of Woodrow Wilson. Therefore a certain friendly bias was inevitable. The bias is the least important characteristic of the book, and so I shall present my case on this point here and be done with it. I find an occasional tendency to overvalue Wilson's positive achievements and to underestimate his failures. The domestic reforms of Wilson's first administration were less revolutionary than a reader would infer from Professor Dodd's text. Wall Street was not so completely disestablished as Professor Dodd assumes, and the "charter of free labor" in the Clayton act has since proved an unintended humbug. From Professor Dodd's summary of the peace terms and the Covenant one would never guess why liberals are so dissatisfied with them.

Wilson's Russian policy is treated far too gently. Professor Dodd suggests that Wilson went into Siberia because Japan intended to do so, and needed to be watched. But did not Wilson foresee that presently we should get out and Japan remain? And if all he intended was to play friend in the guise of invader, what did he mean by authorizing George Creel to let loose the maleficent anti-Russian propaganda, beginning with the Sisson documents which, as historian, he never could have taken at their face value? Professor Dodd apologizes for Wilson's cabinet appointments. Only one, he says, was really bad. Which? He says that no vital interest of the country suffered from Wilson's diplomatic appointments. How about a broken down politician like Francis, sent to Russia at a time when the utmost tact and skill and intelligence were needed to deal with a condition that might affect the peace of the world, for good or for evil, through generations? So much for the debits on account of bias. They represent but a trifling deduction from the credits of a portrait well and authentically drawn, a portrait so true that you can form your own judgment of it, independently, according to your own expertness in physiognomy. As one follows through the details of Professor Dodd's account, one finds himself moved as by a well constructed tragedy.

Woodrow Wilson appears before the imagination like a man set apart from the beginning to do great things, endowed with the vivid sense of self and the identification of the self with the ideal, of personal ambition with the highest duty, that make up a really tragic figure. By his own power of personality and ambition he rose to unimagined heights, to be first for a time in a world of such colossal proportions as ours of today. And by virtue of his own character—though here Professor Dodd would not agree with me—he faltered, compromised and fell, and the earth was shaken by the fall.

There is a tragic quality in the whole character of Wilson, but no quality of pathos whatever. Consider: It has been possible for an ardent and warm-hearted friend like Professor Dodd to transcribe the events of Wilson's whole life without producing one single instance of an act of impulsive generosity, or even of the more calculating virtue, magnanimity. Lincoln would have sent Roosevelt to France; he would have put Taft on the peace commission; he would have pardoned Debs. Not Wilson, whose god is a jealous god. Do not look for democracy. Bryan is a democrat, and loves and trusts the people. He could say in all sincerity: "The people have given and the people have taken away; blessed be the name of the people." Wilson could not possibly repeat that formula. He is a demagogue, as the Gracchi or Pericles were demagogues, one who comes out of a class apart, not to find the will of the people and to accomplish it, but to find the way for the people by his own light, and to lead them along the way. In so far as he ever has attained to disinterestedness, it has been through the purification, the consecration of his egoism, not through its surrender. In such singleness of reference there is tragic strength, but also presage of tragic defeat.

Glance at him in his college student days. He was not very good in scholarship. Scholarship,

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where it is not a pose, demands self-devotion. But he made an excellent record in the debating clubs, which demand self-assertion. Glance at his career as author. His most significant book, Congressional Government, is a debater's masterpiece. His biggest book, The History of the United States, is chiefly an exercise in personal style. He abominated the scientific tendency of modern education; it worked toward depersonalization—"materialism," "agnosticism," as he put it. As president of Princeton he fought a good fight against the luxury and exclusiveness of the fraternities. Other university reformers have sought to transform the colleges into centres for the disinterested pursuit of scientific knowledge. That was neither the purpose nor the tendency of Wilson's reforms. But since they were directed against the college plutocracy, which is popularly confused with autocracy, Wilson, the real aristocrat, found himself idolized as a democrat in the educational world. In the end he was beaten at Princeton, on an issue which had no real bearing on democracy. But he had won for himself the splendid political position of a great leader persecuted for democracy's sake, and democracies despite the proverb are grateful.

Wilson talked like a democrat and rang like a conservative, and that was the kind of man the Democratic party needed, after its defeats under Bryan and Parker alike. How Wilson came to be groomed for the Presidency by the political bosses, how he gambled with the bosses, his soul against their good gifts, and carried off both, is a story too long and too recent to be summarized here. He knew that political power does not gravitate to abstract goodness but must be won by grasping the appropriate strings. He grasped the strings resolutely, and went to Washington to achieve his will and the interest of the people, and he did in fact achieve them. And one cannot look at that legislative record without feeling that Wilson's rather ruthless methods of building himself up into a great egocentric personal power were justified by the event.

Then came the war. One cannot learn from the biography just when Woodrow Wilson conceived his great design, to devote his personality fortified by every force he could draw into it to the creation of a permanent organization for peace on the ruins of the war. Probably Professor Dodd does not know; perhaps Wilson does not know himself. At any rate, the opportunity lay before him, and American neutrality offered itself as an instrument, with the more dangerous instrument of American belligerency in reserve.

But there again it was necessary for Wilson to assure himself of all the strings of power. He could be arbiter of peace only if he had a united nation behind him that would follow him to peace or war. The chief forces of the industrial east were for unconditional war, without reservations as to the kind of peace to end it; the west and south, Wilson's chief strength, were against war. Resolutely Wilson set about defining issues on which Americans could agree, and continued this work even after America was committed to war. But the original war party would have none of Wilson's peace projects, and set out to take the mastery of the enterprise away from him. Wilson sought to outplay them by appealing to the war passion in terms as extreme as those of the pure militarist, and by discouraging or even suppressing the liberal opinion that was wholly loyal to the peace program that alone offered promise of world improvement through the war. Wilson might carry on peace offensives; nobody else should. But anyone might agitate for war to no other end than destruction, and stand as an orthodox alongside of Wilson. That, I think, was the beginning of the tragic failure. The war machine was running down the slope, gathering momentum, and Wilson had failed to provide for brakes. The war party, not Wilson, held the balance of power in America when Germany collapsed and sued for peace.

But the European peoples, if not the European governments, knew what war meant, and yearned for a secure peace. Might not a direct appeal to the European peoples force the governments to Wilson's terms? Wilson felt for a time capable of going to any lengths that might be necessary to win. That, I think, accounts for the confident tone of his first European addresses. He was ready, I believe, to face the possibility of a general revolution, in the event of his denouncing the conference and appealing directly to the people. But this heroic mood did not last. The excesses of the Russian revolution, exaggerated manifold by the propaganda that Wilson himself had set in motion, sapped away his courage. When the Allied statesmen knew that, they knew that few real concessions to Wilson were necessary.

That is my own interpretation, not Dodd's. In the opinion of Dodd, the fact that Wilson had lost in the congressional elections and was being backfired by his Senatorial enemies accounts for the breaking of his influence. I should be the last to dispute the bearing of this fact upon Wilson's negotiating power. He was dealing with a group of men who acknowledged only real forces, not ideal ones. Hope of reward or fear of disaster could alone move the European diplomats to desist from

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their selfish scheming. If Wilson had been able to play the United States unreservedly he might have been able to offer substantial economic aid in reconstruction, or military aid that would enable the harassed European governments to reduce their own burdens of armament. For such gifts the European governments might have made concessions. Or, if America had stood behind Wilson, he might have faced the risk of European revolution more calmly, and so have played that card better. The point to bear in mind, however, is that Wilson failed, not because the United States withheld the "moral support," that a congressional victory might have implied, but because the United States was not in the least prepared either to deal out substantial rewards or to enshrine in its bosom a Samson president who had pulled down the European political structure.

But suppose the country had been prepared for a policy involving the risk of revolution. Would Wilson have pursued it to its end, world peace or European revolution? I do not believe he would. Just as he had set out to stir the war spirit of the people, and ended by incorporating it, like everything else he ever used, in his own personality, so his anti-Russian propaganda had incorporated itself in his personality. His real card was gone. And so he had to fall back on his personal influence and his powers of persuasion. Professor Dodd says: "His personal presence, his unparalleled power of persuasion, his voice make him a force in any group; I was about to say the dominant force in any group of men." Yes, in any group, like an American mass meeting, where his hearers are not asked to accept conviction at the expense of substantial interests. But mere persuasion could not swerve European statecraft from its course. All that remained to Wilson was to use this power to put a good face on the bad business. But even here, where success would have been failure, Wilson failed.

Yet in some sense Wilson did not wholly lose. Possibly it was really his influence that saved Dalmatia for the Jugoslavs and defeated the project of the Rhine boundary. Professor Dodd enumerates a number of other gains due to Wilson's efforts. I do not wish to depreciate the value of those gains, but I think they are unimportant in comparison with this one: That Wilson succeeded in fixing in the minds of all the peoples an ideal of a just peace by which the shortcomings of the actual peace at Versailles could be measured. Wilson made intelligible the standards by which Wilson's work is condemned. The standards will persist, though Wilson went down in defeat.

ALVIN JOHNSON.

Meditation in E Minor*

I.

I SEEM to be the only sort of man who is never heard of in politics in the Republic, either as candidate or as voter. *Also,* I must write my own platform, make my own speeches, point with my own pride, view with my own alarm, pump up my own hopes and ideals, invent my own lies, posture and grimace upon my own front porch. . . .

II.

Politically I am absolutely honest, which is to say, as honest as possible; which is to say, honest more or less; which is to say, far more honest than the general. My politics are based frankly and wholly upon what, in the dim light now shining in the world, I take to be my self-interest. I do not pretend to any pressing interest in the welfare of any other man, whether material or spiritual; in particular, I do not pretend to any interest in the welfare of any man who belongs to a class that differs clearly from my own. In other words, I am intensely class-conscious—almost the ideal citizen of the radical vision. Virtually all of the men that I know and like and respect belong to my own class, or to some class very closely allied to it. I can't imagine having any active good-will toward a man of a widely differing class—say the class of professional politicians and bureaucrats, or that of wealthy manufacturers, or that of schoolmasters, or that of policemen, ordained and lay. Such men simply do not interest me, save as convenient targets for the malevolence that is in all of us. I like to vex them; beyond that, as old Friedrich used to say, I hand them over to statistics and the devil. If all the members of such a class were deported by Dr. Palmer and his blacklegs tomorrow, my indignation would be transient and theoretical; if I yelled, it would be as I yell occasionally about the massacres in Ireland, Haiti, Armenia and India, hoping all the while that the show doesn't stop.

Here, of course, I wallow in platitudes; I, too, am an American, God save us all! The blather of politics is made up almost wholly of violent and disingenuous attempts to sophisticate and obfuscate those platitudes. Often, of course, the bosh-monger succumbs to his own bosh. The late Major-General Roosevelt, I have no doubt, convinced himself eventually that he was actually the valiant and aseptic Bayard of Service that he pretended to be—that he was a Lafayette sweating unselfishly and agonizingly to protect, instruct, inspire, guide and lift up the great masses of the

* Passed reluctantly by the censor.—THE EDITORS.

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plain people, his inferiors. He was, perhaps, honest, but he was wrong. What moved him was simply a craving for facile and meaningless banzais, for the gaudy eminence and power of the leader of a band of lynchers, for the mean admiration of mean men. His autobiography gives him away; what he left out of it he babbled to the deacon of his mass, Leary, and to the sub-deacon, Abbott. Had Roosevelt been the aristocrat that legend made him, his career would have presented a truly astonishing spectacle: Brahms seeking the applause of organ grinders, piano tuners and union cornetists. But he was no such aristocrat, either by birth or by training. He was simply a professional politician of the democratic kidney, by Harvard out of the Rotary Club bourgeoisie, and his good was always the good of his well-fed, bombastic and extremely shallow class. Immediately his usual victims became class-conscious on their own hook, he was their enemy, and showed all the horror of them that one would look for in John D. Rockefeller, Jr., Judge Gary or Frank A. Munsey.

III.

The class that I belong to is an interior subclass of the order of capitalists. I am not rich, but my ease and welfare depend very largely upon the security of wealth. If stocks and bonds became valueless tomorrow, I'd be forced to supplement my present agreeable work with a good deal of intensely disagreeable work. Hence I am in favor of laws protecting property, and am an admirer of the Constitution of the United States in its original form. If such laws can be enforced peacefully, i. e., by deluding and hornswoggling the classes whose interests they stand against, then I am in favor of so enforcing them; if not, then I am in favor of employing professional bullies, e. g., policemen, soldiers and Department of Justice thugs, to enforce them with the sword. Here I borrow the morality of the radicals, who are my enemies; their arguments in favor of an alert class-consciousness convince me, but I stick to my own class. I borrow even more from the liberals, who are also my enemies. In particular, I borrow the doctrine that peace in such matters is better than war—that it is foolish to hire gunmen when it is so much simpler and easier to bamboozle the boobs with phrases. Here, of course, a trade interest helps out my class consciousness; I am a professional maker of phrases and delight in displays of virtuosity. The liberals feed me with that delight. This explains why I like them and encourage them, though their politics usually depress me.

But though I am thus in favor of property and would be quite content to see one mob of poor men (in uniform) set to gouging and ham-stringing another mob of poor men (in overalls) in order to protect it, it by no means follows that I am in favor of the wealthy bounders who now run the United States, or of the politics that they preach in their kept press. On the contrary, I am even more violently against them than I am against the radicals with their sticks of dynamite and the liberals with their jugs of Peruna. And for a plain reason. On the one hand, these swine oppress me excessively and unnecessarily—by putting up prices, by loading me with inordinate taxes, by setting hordes of bureaucrats to looting me, by demanding that I give my assent to all their imbecile and dishonest ideas, and by threatening me with the cost of endless wars, to them extremely profitable. On the other hand, and even more importantly, their intolerable hoggishness threatens to raise the boobery in revolt and bring about a reign of terror from which only the strongest will emerge. That revolt would ruin me. I am not large enough, as a capitalist, to make a profit out of wars and turmoils. I believe that the rising of the proletariat, if it ever comes in this country, will end in a colossal victory for capitalism—that capitalism, as at present and in the past, will play off one mob against another, and pick the pockets of both. But it will also pick my pockets. It will also force me, who had nothing to do with the row, and protested against it bitterly, to pay a tremendous price for getting out alive. I'll have my naked hide, but everything else will be lost, including honor.

Ah, that my vision were a mere nightmare, the child of encroaching senility and bad beer! Unluckily, the late lamentable war showed its terrible reality. That war was fought against my advice and consent, and I took no part in it whatever, save as spectator. In particular, I made no profit out of it—not a cent, directly or indirectly. Well, what is my situation today? In brief, I find that my property is worth, roughly speaking, no more than half of what it was worth at the end of 1916, and that, considering its ratio to the total national wealth, and the difference between the national debt then and now, I owe, as a citizen of the United States, something between $8,000 and $10,000. To whom? Who got it, and how, and for what? . . . Let us not go into the question too particularly. I find my class-consciousness wobbling!

IV.

Meanwhile, however, I still manage to eat without too much labor, and so I incline to the Right, and am a Tory in politics, and trust in God. It would give me great pleasure to vote for a Tory candidate for the Presidency—not a hollow ass

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like General Wood, but an honest and unashamed Tory, one voicing the sincere views of the more civilized section of the propertied class, not a mere puppet for usurers. Unfortunately, no such candidate ever offers himself. The men put up by these usurers are always such transparent frauds that it is impossible, without anæsthetics, to vote for them. I admire liars, but surely not liars so clumsy that they cannot fool even themselves. I am an old hand at political shows, and witnessed both the nomination of Harding at Chicago and that of Cox at San Francisco. It would be difficult to imagine more obscene spectacles. Who, being privy to their disgusting trimming, their mean courting of mean men, their absolute lack of any sense of dignity, honor or self-respect, could vote for either? It will take me all the time between now and November, abandoning all other concerns, to work up the necessary cynicism—and no doubt I'll fail even then. But could I vote for Christiansen? He is a Knight of Pythias; allow me my prejudices! Debs? Please don't suggest it in plain words. It would be anguish unspeakable; I am probably the only man in Christendom who has never been a Socialist even for an instant. An idiot, this Debs, but honest, and he says plainly that he is against me. I'd be a worse idiot if I voted for him.

My dilemma, alas, is not unique. Thousands of other men must face it—men of my class, men of related classes, perhaps even men of classes far removed. It visualizes one of the penalties that democracy, the damnedest of frauds, inflicts upon every man who violates all its principles by trying to be honest.

H. L. MENCKEN.

German Coal

ON the day of his departure for Spa I saw Dr. Dernburg. "If we lose our coal," he declared, "our whole system collapses. If the Allies mortgage the Ruhr and exploit Upper Silesia without giving us a large share of the coal our position is hopeless."

At Spa, as many of us had anticipated, negotiations became primarily a dispute over the disposition of German coal. Even disarmament was a secondary issue, one decided upon more to give a national satisfaction to the French—to prove on paper at least that the victory paid—than to accomplish any very positive result. The military dispute was simply a smoke cloud for the vital question of coal.

Ruhr coal is essential to France in the first place to meet the deficit due to wanton destruction by the Germans of mines in northern France. It is also needed, and this is the reason for much of French insistence at Spa, to exploit the German Lorraine iron fields which have now been returned to France. French manufacturers hope to win the place which Germany has lost in the world's market, and by using German coal, to cripple a dangerous rival in the process. To German industry this same coal means just as much as it does to French. It is its life's blood, the only commodity which Germany can export to secure necessary raw materials.

Coal, then, took precedence at Spa. The negotiations were conducted by the chancelleries, but behind them were the technical experts and the representatives of big manufacturers. There was no one at Spa to represent the interests of French labor. But many of the preliminary estimates for the French had been prepared by the big Loucheur group and by the Comité des Forges, representing all French mine owners. The Germans, too, had a large delegation of technical advisers, among them Herr Stinnes. Although Stinnes more than any other man is supposed to have been responsible for the policy of destroying French mines, Millerand nevertheless requested a preliminary conference with him in Brussels. Such a conference, a year before, Stinnes had been denied.

The French Premier could not agree that both German and French interests could profit by an extended lease of confidence in the German owners. It is generally known that Stinnes and others of the big owners in the Ruhr would have welcomed collaboration which would have secured them their continued high profits from coal and (through the support of Allied troops) permitted them to keep the German workers quiet. Big industry in France was not averse to this solution, but Millerand and Stinnes split over the output that the German mines should give the Allies. The French wanted fully a third more than the Germans offered. When, finally, two million tons were demanded by ultimatum the German owners left Spa in anger. Such an amount would have eliminated their profits. With an Old Testament gesture of despair, Stinnes declared, "We have been strangled and deceived."

German interests put particular emphasis upon

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the necessity of such modification of the Peace Treaty as to permit Germany to secure the world market price for coal. Up to the present time the Allies have been receiving coal at the German inland price. Here the French had a choice between two alternatives. Unless the Germans can profit by their coal exports sufficiently to improve their exchange they will be unable to put their finances back in order to pay subsequent indemnity demands. The French, therefore, by taking coal at a low value, now destroy the possibility of large future indemnities. They are, however, exceedingly sceptical about those future German indemnities, and therefore prefer a present return to a future hope.

This decision was a serious setback to the German groups, who had hoped to be able to reach a mutually satisfactory understanding which would assure large profits to both Allied and German capitalists. The real indication of this defeat is the fact that the mine owners are now for the first time turning to the miners and saying: "You will not let this injustice be done." The conservative papers are suddenly showing an interest in the ideas of the miners. The Deutsche Tageszeitung has made a discovery. "The mine owners spoke of the impossible figure of the demand," it says. "The miners, however, put their emphasis on the capacity of the workers. The diplomats can decide what they like, but the real decision is with the miners as to how much coal they will produce."

The German workmen have been watching Spa with more curiosity than anxiety. They registered a very moderate satisfaction that Otto Hue was called in, and that the chancelleries had decided to include labor as a factor in production. Their satisfaction was only moderate, however, because they foresaw that the immediate burden of the new accord will fall first on their own shoulders. One of the miners writes in the Independent Socialist paper Freedom: "Our capitalists will try first of all to excite us to further production by alternating sugar plums with the whip end. In this way they will seek to have us satisfy the demands of the Allies, but to do so without compromising their own interests."

The conclusion which the German miners reach is that Spa was a defeat for the German capitalists. They feel that their own mine owners are superfluous and that power is coming into their own hands. The threat of further occupation did not upset them in the way it did Stinnes, who accused the Allies of still suffering from the "malady of victory." The workmen are patriotic enough to prefer not having the Allies occupy more of Germany, but at the same time they have no love for their own Reichswehr, and between the two they have little choice. They were not impressed by the menace of occupation. One of them said: "French nationalistic circles thought that by having Marshal Foch rattle his saber they could somehow conjure up the coal French capitalists need. But what would happen if we simply stood by, with our arms crossed? Would the soldiers be able to dig the coal themselves?"

The German miners do not regard Spa as the last word concerning coal production. They are reserving their own decision. Otto Hue, head of the Miners' Union (Socialist) said very bluntly at Spa: "The diplomats in conference can decide whatever they like. The real decision is with the miners both as to how far the demands will be met and the way this will be done." Hue went to Spa only when he was asked. He talked with Lloyd George only when the Prime Minister expressed a wish to meet him. He did not fail to make it clear that he would have preferred to talk about coal with his friend Smillie. "Our comrades from other countries will understand our needs," he said. "We miners are willing to admit that the country has incurred an obligation for the needless destruction of French mining shafts by our military command. We want to help France and other countries with coal. But the only real solution of the whole problem is that coal, iron and other commodities of first necessity be pooled so that each people gets its share." Hue was willing enough that the French get German coal. But in exchange they must give iron and foodstuffs. It may be that his thought went further. Perhaps it included American copper and American wheat. If it did, Hue did not mention it. Perhaps he has no time for distant dreams.

SANFORD GRIFFITH.

America and England: A Literary Comparison

A LITTLE while ago the Art Theatre gave a performance of Chekhov's Cherry Orchard in London. It was not precisely a good performance, but it was certainly not a bad one. The quality of that perfect play, trembling between laughter and tears, came through to the audience. On the morning after we looked in our newspapers to see what the critics would have to say to what is indubitably the greatest of all modern plays. We are surfeited with bad ones in London nowadays; to have to see them is like being condemned to read an unending series of third-rate novels, for our dramatic hacks have only a fraction of the sheer technical ability of yours. If our managers

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want a competent melodrama, they have to import it from New York. So that we could not help thinking that The Cherry Orchard would be manna in the desert to the critics. They had had nothing to write about for so long that they would jump at the opportunity of showing us what they are made of.

They did. There was not one of them, with the exception of Mr. St. John Ervine, in the Observer, and Mr. Swinnerton, in the Nation, who had the faintest notion that he had been to see a masterpiece. The Cherry Orchard was tedious; it was silly; it was a characteristic product of the country which had produced Bolshevism; it was an amateurish, long-winded version à la Russe of Mr. Galsworthy's The Skin Game. In short, our dramatic critics showed that they have not changed a jot since the brave old days when Ibsen was first brought to London. I have not the energy which Mr. Shaw possessed in those stirring times, or I should make a pamphlet-anthology of the critics' outpourings on The Cherry Orchard. But I earnestly recommend any American writer who is oppressed by the intolerable airs which we English give ourselves in matters of culture to remember the date of this astonishing exhibition of critical stupidity. The files of the daily press for July 12, 1920, will provide him with material enough for a very good bombshell to drop into literary London in 1930, when The Cherry Orchard will have become a classic.

Though we are too tired to begin a battle royal in London over this revelation of critical incompetence, we are not too tired to think about it; and thinking about it inevitably leads one to wonder whether they order these things better in America. For curious stories reach our ears. We learn that intelligent plays, which cannot get a hearing in London, have long and successful runs in New York; we find that some of our better books which sell a bare thousand in England have three times the sale in America; we discover that a weekly critical journal like the New Republic has a circulation three times as big as that of its counterpart in England. These things are disquieting; nor is their effect greatly mitigated by the knowledge that America is much bigger than England, and much richer, and that it is precisely the cultivated classes in England who are impoverished at the present time.

I confess I know absolutely nothing of the condition of dramatic criticism in New York, yet I feel tolerably certain that your critics would not have given themselves away as ours did over The Cherry Orchard. They might not have liked it; they might have been puzzled by it, but I think they would have known that it ought to be considered as respectfully as, say, The Wild Duck. They would at least have heard of Chekhov's name and taken care that they did not commit any outrageous ineptitude about him. They would have walked warily, knowing that they were in the presence of a work of art with a world-wide reputation.

I do not intend to maintain that America at the present moment provides a more discriminating audience than England for serious work in literature; but it certainly looks as though the number of people who are prepared to give these things their respectful attention is considerably greater in America than in England, and it seems that the chances are that they will increase in numbers and discrimination in America, while they dwindle in England. As far, at least, as general critical deportment goes, America appears to have a decided advantage, and it would follow that a decent writer has a much better chance of making a decent living in America than in England. The number of people who will support him is greater. Whether they would support him because they appreciated him or because they thought they ought to support him is another, and on the whole, a less important matter.

What is true is that the corresponding class in England, of people who respect good literature, even though they may not appreciate it wholly, who buy good books as much with the object of educating as of pleasing themselves, has been on the decline for some years, and the decline has been hastened by the war. So recently as fifteen years ago a really enthusiastic review in the Times Literary Supplement or the Athenæum was enough to give a book not perhaps a great popular success but a palpable one. Nowadays it would be remarkable if it sold five hundred copies of the book it praised. One part of the class which used to follow the advice of the responsible critic has gained the courage of its own inferior convictions; the other part has been pauperized by the war.

If it were solely a question of the size of the audience which would support a good author, from whatever motive, America would have precedence. But support, though it is vitally important, is perhaps not the thing that the conscientious author most hungers for. Appreciation of the right kind will keep him going through a minimum of commercial success, as in fact it has kept Mr. Conrad and Mr. W. H. Hudson going. An Englishman may be pardoned for holding that in this respect England still holds the lead. I do not believe that the average standard of criticism is higher in England than America. The affair of The Cherry Orchard shows that that is hardly possible. But

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above a certain level it seems to me that there is a greater faculty of discrimination in our criticism.

To tell the truth, an English critic is often taken aback when he reads the work of his American confrère. He finds the most startling juxtapositions, the oddest names linked together. I myself have seen, for instance, an American critic who had begun to win my confidence by his method of attack, suddenly shatter it by placing on the same level Conrad, Galsworthy, W. J. Locke and Stephen McKenna. That is simply bewildering. Again, I have read with growing admiration of his vigorous style and picturesque expression a number of essays by H. L. Mencken, only to be dumbfounded by his declaring at the beginning of another that the most promising of all the younger English authors is W. L. George. To call that statement rank heresy is to put it mildly. For though it is conceivable that W. L. George is the best of the young writers Mr. Mencken has read, that would only prove he had not read enough of them to pronounce any judgment at all. A round dozen young English writers must disappear below the horizon before W. L. George's star is visible.

It may be that the American criticism which I have read is not really representative of the best, although I have been at some pains to follow the best I could find. Moreover, it may appear impertinent in me to put forward a personal opinion on these matters, yet I feel that the personal opinion may have some interest, above all, seeing that it is shared by not a few English writers known to me. The conclusions I have reached are, roughly, these. For buying and reading a good English author, America; for placing him, England is to be preferred. While the audience to which the serious literary artist may look for a livelihood is dwindling in England, it is increasing in America, where there appears, through a telescope anyhow, to be an eager and growing desire to come into contact with the best work that is being done. Again, there seems to be a more genuine tolerance of literary experiment in America than in England. The result is that a great many things appear to be taken seriously in America that we should not put up with England; on the other hand, a number of promising things are given a fair chance in America that would be stifled at birth with us.

The attitude of the ordinary Englishman of letters toward America is a compound of genuine bewilderment and faintly contemptuous indifference. The indifference comes largely, I think, from the ease with which a second-rate English writer appears to persuade an American audience to take him at his own valuation. The cause of the bewilderment lies in the apparent paralysis of discrimination which overtakes American criticism when it endeavors to sift out what is permanently important in contemporary English production. But it is no longer reasonable for us to try to shut ourselves up in our ivory tower. A general though undiscriminating appetite for good work in the public is more valuable to literature in the long run than the connoisseurship of a chosen few. For this reason, to one observer, at least, America rather than England seems to satisfy the conditions of literary salvation.

JOHN MIDDLETON MURRY.

Senator Harding Finds an Issue

"American markets cannot be systematically surrendered to foreign producers, however kindly we may feel toward our Allies."

"Sicilian lemons, owing to demoralized after-war conditions, distorted rates of exchange and extraordinary pressure to get business, can compete in American markets with the home product, and gain the business."

—*New York Times, August 13th.*

Never within the memory of man
(I speak advisedly, the phrase will scan)
Has such an evil threatened, such a demon
As this insidious Sicilian lemon.
My countrymen—if I may so presume
To claim (in metaphor) a common womb,
A common ancestry of normal men
Who struck again, again, and yet again
(I sacrifice exactity to style)
Against, as some one said, the durance vile
Of foreign importations at low price,—
If I may claim—I will be more precise—
A common corporation and compact
Of counter-continental thought and act,—
Then I may say, if you allow my boast,
My heart has bleeded for one lemon lost
More, and with deeper suritude of tears,
Than ever it has bled these troubled years
For any treaty or involved alliance
Or pact improffered for impure affiance.
Here I am I at last; my feet are firm;
The very idiom and trenchant term
Wherein I couch my anger was of old
Blazed on the banners that shall still enfold
Or drape, or say accouter, our fair land.
Unclose, or even open, that rough hand
Of honest toil and Tariff's written there.
Beside this noble issue who shall dare
To talk of social chaos or of peace,
Or oil in Mexico or state police?
Let Europe rape her Europes! Let who will
Excite unrest by recognizing ill.
I say, though we have much to love her for
(She was, I'm told, our Ally in the war)
They shall not pass, not one Sicilian seed,
Not one unripened lemon, till we're feed.
To this I pledge my strength, my party's aid,
America for American lemonade!

A. MACL.

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Proportional Representation

FOR the first time in a federal or provincial election the system of proportional representation has been tested by Canadian voters. The testing took place in the city of Winnipeg during the recent legislative campaign in Manitoba.

As a result of the balloting several things have been learned. Candidates now realize that election deposits are not safe under the P. R. system unless they are sure of some reasonable support from the electorate. Voters have learned that the figure "one" is not sufficient on a ballot and that their choices should be equal, under ordinary conditions, to at least the number of candidates to be elected. Above all others, the one lesson that stands out as a result of the recent Winnipeg balloting is that proportional representation is not only practicable but also produces equitable results.

The contests in the remainder of Manitoba were conducted under the old system, the system of proportional representation being used only in the capital. The whole of the Winnipeg area was grouped into one constituency, and ten seats in the legislature were allotted to it. Forty-one candidates were nominated, consisting of ten Liberals, ten Conservatives, ten Labor nominees and eleven Independents. This superabundance of candidates was the cause of considerable trouble to the election officials, as well as to the counting staff. It also turned out to be somewhat costly to those candidates who had to lose their deposits.

The Manitoba Election act provides that any defeated candidate who received first choices less in number than twenty-five per cent of the quota shall lose his or her deposit of $200. Under this regulation twenty-five candidates lost their deposits and the government profited to the extent of $5,000. The candidates affected under this regulation consisted of eight Independents, seven Conservatives, five Liberals and five Labor nominees.

Under the proportional system as practiced during the Manitoba elections the voter was allowed only one vote, but that vote was transferable. When marking the ballot the voter places the figure one opposite the name of the candidate whom he wishes to see elected. The figure one is called his first choice. He continues to place numbers opposite the names of candidates he favors by putting the figure two against his next choice, the figure three against another, and so on down the list.

When the polling was completed on election night the first task of the counting staff was to tabulate the number of choices given to first candidate; the second was to segregate the ballot papers into separate bundles, according to the candidates for whom they were given.

When the first count was completed it was found that 47,427 good ballots had been cast. The quota was then ascertained by dividing this number by one more than the number of seats to be filled and adding one to the result. This meant that to secure election at this stage of the proceedings a candidate had to have at least 4,312 votes. Two candidates were elected on the first count, and a third candidate was elected on the second count. The fourth candidate was not elected until the thirty-first count, the fifth was elected on the thirty-second count, the sixth and seventh on the thirty-third count, and the remaining three on the thirty-seventh count.

The Independent candidates were entirely eliminated from the contest, plainly demonstrating that a candidate must be supported by a fairly strong group of voters if his election is to be secured. There were 6,362 votes cast for the eleven Independent candidates on the first count, yet not one of these candidates benefited sufficiently from the subsequent counts to secure election. In the ordinary form of balloting those who voted for the Independent candidates would have wasted their votes. Under the new system, however, the votes were simply transferred to the next choices marked on the ballot.

As a result of the transfers the Liberal candidates received approximately 2,500 votes, the Conservatives gained approximately 1,400 votes, and Labor received over 500 votes more than was shown in the original count. It will be noted that the Independent vote went principally to the Liberal and Labor candidates when it was distributed.

The final result demonstrated effectively the fairness of proportional representation as a method in election. The Labor vote represented a little more than 40 per cent of the total vote, and Labor elected 40 per cent of the members. The Liberal vote represented nearly 40 per cent of the total vote, and the Liberals elected 40 per cent of the members. The Conservatives were supported by voters representing a little less than

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20 per cent of the total vote, and they elected 20 per cent of the members.

That proportional representation affords freedom of choice and a certain independence on the part of the voter is indicated by the Winnipeg balloting. An outstanding instance of this was given in the transfer of the surplus of Dixon, the Labor candidate. Dixon received 11,586 votes, being 7,274 more than he needed. As a result Dixon's ballots were reexamined to ascertain the second choices marked thereon. The result was as follows: Second choices for Labor candidates 1,075, second choices for Liberal candidates 368, second choices for Conservative candidates 310, second choices for Independent candidates 768 and non-transferable 67. This clearly shows that over 1,400 voters who originally voted Labor marked their second choices for non-labor candidates.

Another instance is found in the elimination of Jacob, another Labor candidate. Jacob's votes totalled 2,347 and were distributed as follows: Ninety-one votes went to Labor candidates, 147 votes to Conservative candidates, 1,770 votes to Liberal candidates, 188 votes to Independent candidates with 151 votes non-transferable. This result showed unmistakably that 18 per cent of Jacob's votes went to candidates other than Liberal.

The transfer of votes credited to Christie, a Conservative candidate, at the time of his elimination showed that 33 votes went to Labor candidates, 145 to Liberal candidates, 1,354 to Conservative candidates, 157 to Independents, with 37 non-transferable. From this it will be seen that nearly 20 per cent of the Conservative votes left the party at the time when the transfer was made.

In the last count, 1,867 ballots were non-transferable, or, in other words, exhausted. This simply meant that 1,867 voters lost their votes because they did not mark sufficient choices on their ballots. Many of them were content with just marking the figure one. With forty-one candidates it was necessary to mark at least ten choices on the ballot. Those who did not do that ran the risk of having their ballots used up—each of the candidates for whom they had marked having possibly been either elected or defeated. The result of the test of proportional representation by the electors of Winnipeg has created a demand for a further enlargement of the system throughout the Dominion of Canada and it is possible that this may be instituted in several cities when the next federal election takes place.

OWEN E. MCGILLICUDDY.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Tsar on the American Menace

SIR: I discovered in the attic the other day an old file of Harper's Weekly. In one issue (June 26, 1875) was an editorial comment on a Memorial Day oration delivered by somebody or other, in which the orator alludes to the hostility of Louis Napoleon of France to the United States during the Civil War, and to his attempts to persuade the other European Powers to recognize the Confederacy and thereby weaken our Government, which he regarded as a standing menace to the European theory of government.

Louis Napoleon approached the Tsar of Russia in this connection, "but," as the orator remarks, "the great-hearted Emperor was our true friend. He said to his Minister, 'You do not go far enough. Tell Napoleon that the republic has freely chosen its own form of government, and does not attempt to interfere with ours; tell him that they have as much right to their form as we have to ours; and tell him further, Prince, that if he attempts to interfere with them, *I will strike him!*'"

MERRILL ROGERS.

Westport, Connecticut.

The Two Andersons

SIR: What a difference between the two Andersons. the judge in Boston and the one in Indianapolis.

NICHOLAS KLEIN.

Cincinnati, Ohio.

Anti-German Prejudice

SIR: Allow me, please, to submit an excerpt from a letter, written by the manager of one of the largest teachers' agencies in the country.

"I appreciate your frank letter. It is a matter of regret that I have been unable to render you more effective assistance. The fault has been neither yours nor mine, but, in my opinion, due to the fact that it would be generally supposed that you are of German descent. This I find to be an insuperable barrier, a stone wall against which one may throw his energies unavailingly. I am aware of the fact that there are many excellent gentlemen and most competent teachers who are of German ancestry, but the war is too soon over for anyone to expect prejudices and animosities to have subsided. I have had a number of men who were evidently capable and who, like yourself, presented splendid testimonials and record, but failed utterly to secure any recognition from places for which they applied. Only in rare instances where I had an opportunity to talk personally with the presidents did they give the reasons for the rejection of these men. In most cases they would say: "I have no prejudice myself, but simply cannot afford to employ anybody of German birth or ancestry on account of the criticism which might arise."

Do you believe that a people which thus boycotts a class of fellow-citizens, and intellectuals at that, is really ripe for the "league of nations"? Do they not show themselves ripe for the continuation of idiotic hate?

PH. S.

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Liberties Won by Our Fathers

SIR: There is evidence that the United States is about to deport a number of aliens who were rounded up as communists in the January raids. Among those liable to be deported are nationals of Poland and Austria, countries now suffering the horrors of starvation and diseases induced by the prolonged ravages of of war.

The methods of the United States Department of Justice up to date in dealing with alie under suspicion of being communists have b n the grossest affront to every principle of American constitutional liberties. This may seem an over-bold statement. But it is supported by The Report Upon the Illegal Practices of the United States Department of Justice, which is signed by twelve reputable lawyers, among them Roscoe Pound, Dean of the Harvard Law School, and two other Harvard Law School professors, while the decision of Judge George W. Anderson, of the District Court of Massachusetts, on application of a writ of habeas corpus in the case of certain aliens and for a reduction of bail in certain other cases, corroborates the findings of these twelve lawyers. Judge Anderson's opinion, which was handed down on June 26th is reviewed in the New Republic of July 14th. This decision the New Republic declares, "will stand as one of the permanent landmarks in the history of human freedom."

Over and above the "illegal practices" of the Department of Justice in its dealings with the "Red suspects, of which the twelve lawyers and Judge Anderson give crushing proof, and which indeed were acknowledged to the Court by Government officials, Judge Anderson found a complete lack of evidence that the Communist Party or any of the communist suspects who were taken in the January raids advocated the overthrow of the Government by "force or violence" or had attempted or committed any overt act. They believed in "propaganda by words, not by deeds," so Judge Anderson declared. They met openly in halls, not secretly; not in armories, not in laboratories where explosives might be compounded. No weapons of "the cutting or exploding kind with which modern wars, insurrections and revolutions are carried on," were found on their persons or their premises. They did not advocate bombing or the destruction of property.

A further affront to American traditional and constitutional practices of fair play, attested by the twelve lawyers and by Judge Anderso and confessed to by Government officials under oath, lies in the swarm of "under cover men" (in effect agents provocateurs) who were let loose upon an unsuspecting public by the Department of Justice, and in the inspired propaganda alleging the discovery of a plot for revolution by force and violence, with which the Department of Justice filled the press.

In view of the above facts, Judge Anderson concluded that the Departments, both of Labor and of Justice, have committed an error of law in holding communists to be deportable under the statute enacted by Congress on October 16, 1918.

Until the decision of Judge Anderson is reversed by the Supreme Court, it would seem that the deportation of aliens upon the sole ground that they are communists should be stayed. And to this end proceedings are being instituted.

Already over and above large sums raised for bail an expense has been incurred of over $13,000, collected from the nickels and dimes of wage earners, in defending fellow workers threatened with deportation, and in caring for the families of deportees, left dependent in a strange land. The claim that the Department of Justice sees that adequate relief is given the dependents of deportees is asserted by the twelve lawyers to be without foundation in fact.

It is estimated that several thousand dollars may be needed for the new legal proceedings recently instituted. Once the facts are known to the public it should be easy to collect this sum from persons outside the ranks of the so-called workers, who love the good name of America and who resent a wrong done to a stranger within our gates, as a violation of America's most sacred obligation.

And copies of the Report of the Illegal Practices of the Department of Justice will be mailed upon request and the receipt of fifty cents.

ELIZABETH GLENDOWER EVANS.

Boston, Massachusetts.

For the Women of Armenia

SIR: I want to write you an appeal to the Christian conscience of the women of America to come forward and use their influence to liberate the thousands of Armenian women and girls and little children who, two years after the cessation of hostilities, are still being kept in captivitity in Turkish harems. This is not only an outrage to Armenia proper, but it is an offense against the honor of women throughout the world. I want to ask the Christian people of this country if the Gospel of Christ has ever allowed these outrages to be left unnoticed and unprotected?

The American missionaries did a great educational work in Turkey. This work resulted in the general progress of the Armenian people, and this progress made manifest in different lines resulted in the envy of the Turks, and in due course of time this envy gave way to massacre. It seems to me that here lies a responsibility of the American Board and the American people, as long as they are in a sense responsible for the conditions created, they are duty bound to do something to save the situation.

This question if left to be decided by men in Congress will not be settled to the satisfaction of the Christian conscience of the country. These men, under the influence of business interests, are apt to allow the American people to relapse into gross selfishness, without any concern for the miseries and terrors of the trembling hopes of humanity. Their patriotism, which cannot see beyond its own frontiers, is not sufficient to decide great issues. Edith Cavell said truly that even patriotism itself is not enough. Never in all history have the individual courage, the devotion and self sacrifice of the common man and common woman shown out so splendidly as now, but the great tragedy is that all these noble qualities have been ignobly used. Now that the influence of women is dawning, I expect a new era to begin for the United States and for the world, and as a test issue of this new era I propose the liberation of the Christian women of Armenia to be the first illustration of this change of attitude in the history of humanity.

Boston, Massachusetts. DAVID LUKASIAN.

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Hamlet on the Polish War

SIR: Hamlet, the Dane, for some years back, seems to have thought of the greatness of war and its value, human and commercial. The following from Scene IV, Act IV, might bear reprinting even at this age of the world:

Hamlet: Good Sir, whose powers are these?
Captain: They are of Norway, sir.
Ham: How purpos'd, sir, I pray you?
Cap: Against some part of Poland.
Ham: Who commands them, sir?
Cap: The nephew to old Norway, Fortinbras.
Ham: Goes it against the main of Poland, sir, or for some frontier?
Cap: Truly to speak, sir, and with no addition,
We go to gain a little patch of ground.
That hath in it no profit but the name.
To pay five ducats, five, I would not farm it;
Nor will it yield to Norway or the Pole
A ranker rate, should it be sold in fee.
Ham: Why, then the Polack never will defend it.
Cap: Yes, 'tis already garrison'd.
Ham: Two thousand souls and twenty thousand ducats
Will not debate the question of this straw:
This is th' imposthume of much wealth and peace,
That inward breaks, and shows no cause without
Why the man dies. I humbly thank you, sir.
. . . . . .
. . . .To my shame, I see
The imminent death of twenty thousand men,
That for a fantasy and trick of fame
Go to their graves like beds; fight for a plot
Whereon the numbers cannot try the cause;
Which is not tomb enough and continent
To hide the slain.

J. L. K.

Venizelos and the Allies

SIR: As a Greek who loves his country and who has been distressed beyond any telling by the events of the past three years in Greece, I cannot refrain from expressing my gratitude to the New Republic for its editorials on Greece in recent issues. In this feeling I am certain that fully eighty per cent of the Greeks in the United States agree with me.

For five years, now, it has been a matter of despair for us that the world has been filled with the most far-reaching propaganda about Greece giving an utterly false picture of the temper of the Hellenic people, of their ambitions and their political intentions. This propaganda was launched by Venizelos in 1912, when he paid heavily certain French newspapers and certain British writers to present Greece's side of the Balkan conflict, and incidentally to advertise him as the one real statesman of the Near East. With men like Crawfurd Price and women like Demetra Vaka already enlisted as his propagandists, it has been simple for him to enlarge the field of his misrepresentations of the Greek state of mind, and to conduct a veritable campaign for the imperialistic policy through which he has hoped to perpetuate himself in a dictator's rule over Greece.

In this, of course, he had the full assistance of the London and Paris press so long as his policy fitted in with the British and French designs to force Greece into the war whether the Greek people desired to go to war or not. But now even these supporters, both by their censorship of impartial dispatches from Greece and by their active spread of false news about Greece, are beginning to waver in their allegiance to Venizelos. The Revue de Paris on December 15th last published an article by General Sarrail which revealed a change in the French point of view toward Venizelos. The London Evening Standard of June 22nd contains an editorial entitled Greek "Help," which shows a shifting of British sentiment toward the purely imperialistic policy of the present Greek government.

There is, however, another phase of the Greek question which interests me particularly as a ship owner and a business man. I have taken the matter up in two editorials in The Loyal, which I send you. Greece today is ruined. There is no way that Greece can emerge from her financial difficulties save through a moral mortgage of everything Greek to Great Britain. It is, I believe, with full knowledge of this fact that the British government has supported the Greek claims in Asia Minor—knowing that even if Smyrna and Thrace and the Dodekanese Islands are ceded to Greece, Britain has only to put on the pressure of Greece's debt to British bankers to make these territories British colonies under the camouflage of Greek sovereignty, or better still, to make Greece what General Sarrail called it—a British dominion.

To any Greek who loves the independence of his country and who dreams of its future as a prosperous state, depending on its own resources moral as well as economic, there is tragedy in the prospect of a Greece mortgaged to a foreign power, no longer free even to choose its nominal rulers.

New York City. D. J. THEOPHILATOS.

Russia's Motive Power

SIR: As far as I have seen, the writers about Soviet Russia, both friends and enemies, have failed to tell us the most important facts.

The Soviet Republic is a new venture—or experiment in social organization. Its success or failure will depend, on how well, and how rapidly, Russian industry can be developed to serve the needs of the Russian people, and if this can be done without great and permanent departure from communistic ideals. And this, in turn, depends on whether Russia," can reasonably expect trade to be so thoroughly to turn the wheels.

In the beginning of the war Russian industries, such as they were, were moved by English coal.

Not even the most optimistic advocate of "trade with Russia," can reasonably expect trade to be so thouroughly established that Russia will get enough manufactured goods from other countries for her needs, or that she can import enough coal to drive industries of her own. Motive power must be created within the Russian borders, or the Soviet Republic will fail—unless the rest of the world changes greatly.

If anything has been written on this subject, I have failed to see it. The nearest approach to the subject has been some articles about education. That Russian industries should break down, was a foregone conclusian, since they could not run without motive power. In fact, Russian industries began to break down as soon as the imported coal supply got low.

Omaha, Nebraska. B. E. NILSSON.

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A Greek Tragedy

Constantine I and the Greek People, by Paxton Hibben. New York: The Century Company.

PERSONS well versed in world-affairs recognized from the start that, whatever its origin and whatever the issues at stake, the Great War was a life-and-death struggle, and that, being such a struggle, it would inevitably be conducted as a knock-down-and-drag-out fight, with no rules, and with gouging in the clinches. Menaced in their very existence, both sets of combatants were resolved to win at all costs, and neither set was going to jeopardize its chances of victory by respecting hindrances like neutral rights—if it thought the game was worth the candle. This may be deplorable, but it is a fact. Great ruthlessness is an inevitable by-product of Great War.

This aloof viewpoint of political technicians was of course not shared by the world at large. The various warring peoples were at once overwhelmed by war psychology, whose cardinal tenet is an implicit belief that you can do no wrong and your enemy can do no right. Even the neutral peoples were more or less in the same frame of mind. The psychology of America, predominantly pro-Ally from the beginning and becoming a belligerent in the spring of 1917, approximated the psychology of the Allied nations. Accordingly, we heard all about Teutonic ruthlessness, but virtually nothing about Allied ruthlessness. But today the war is over, the ban of censorship is lifted, and we begin to see the other side of the shield. A considerable literature is springing up, revealing the sterner side of the Allies' conduct of the war. In this literature Mr. Hibben's book, Constantine I and the Greek People, takes a prominent place.

Mr. Hibben reveals one of the grimmest episodes of the war—the dragooning of Greece by France and England to serve their war-aims in complete disregard of Greek wishes and Greek interests. It is not a pretty story. Yet it is a story that should be told, and by telling it Mr. Hibben performs a distinct public service. Persons who criticize books like Mr. Hibben's on the ground that they are a useless and mischievous ripping open of old wounds quite miss the larger issues involved. The war has left the world in evil case. One of the prime reasons for the world's present malaise is the persistence of numerous wrongs inflicted during the war under the plea of "military necessity." These wrongs must be righted before the world can get real peace. But before we know how to right them, we must discard our one-sided war-time concepts and learn all the facts in the case. And books like Mr. Hibben's are valuable aids to the acquirement of that fuller knowledge.

Mr. Hibben was well equipped for his task. Trained by long service in our diplomatic corps and in journalism, he was Associated Press correspondent in Athens from the summer of 1915 till the beginning of 1917. As the accredited representative of the chief news service of the greatest of the then-neutral nations, all doors were open to him. Politicians, generals, the King himself, welcomed interviews by Mr. Hibben as a prime means of getting their viewpoints before the outer world. Mr. Hibben was therefore very much "in the know" as to what was going on, not only in the Greek capital, but also in other parts of Greece, in Macedonia, and in Serbia, all of which regions he personally visited. Mr. Hibben's book is thus an eye-witness's account of the Greek tragedy from its early stages to its climax in the so-called "Battle of Athens" between the Greek and Allied troops on December 1, 1916. It is true that King Constantine was not deposed until the following June, some months after Mr. Hibben's departure from Greece, but this was merely a belated finale which previous events had rendered inevitable.

The term "Greek tragedy" is no overstatement, for the course of events in Greece during those stirring war-years 1915-17 has all the fateful urge of an ancient Athenian drama. Destiny seems to have so willed. and men move ineluctably toward a predestined goal. Two figures continuously occupy the stage—King Constantine and Greece's leading statesman, Eleutherios Venizelos. The Great War shatters their former good understanding. Once collaborators, they become protagonists of clashing policies. Venizelos urges Greece to throw herself into the war beside France and England, regardless of risks and confiding absolutely in Franco-British generosity for her reward. Constantine signifies willingness to join France and England, but only on positive Franco-British pledges of Hellenic integrity and the dispatch of enough troops to make a victory in the Near East a reasonable certainty. These pledges the Allies refused to give, and when Constantine refuses to aid them they turn more and more to Venizelos, "their man," and against Constantine, who is stigmatized as "pro-German." Gradually the drama unfolds. Venizelos tries to take matters into his own hands. Constantine dismisses him from office. Venizelos conspires against Constantine, backed by the Allies, who begin to put pressure on Greece. Allied violations of Greek neutrality, seizures of Greek territory, blockades, and attempts to disarm the Greek forces drive Constantine and his subjects into stubborn, embittered opposition, verging on hostility to the Allies. The wretched business culminates in the "Battle of Athens," where landing of Allied troops synchronizing with a Venizelist insurrection brings on bloody fighting between the Allies and the Greek loyalist troops. For the moment the Allies are repelled and the Venizelist conspirators are crushed, but the Allied vise grips Greece harder than ever, Constantine is dethroned and driven into exile, Venizelos is placed in power, and Greece submits to the Allied will.

Such, in brief, is a synopsis of the story which Mr. Hibben tells in graphic fashion and with a wealth of picturesque details. It is interesting to note that the body of the book was written immediately after the events described, in the spring of 1917, and was on the point of publication when (America having entered the war) "in certain quarters it was felt that its publication at that precise moment would embarrass our associates in the war." Its appearance was therefore postponed till the present day, though no textual changes have been made. A foreword has alone been added, explaining the reasons for its deferred publication and sketching the course of Greek events to date.

The book, as a whole, is well done. It is written in a clear, readable style, is carefully documented, and is unusually free from errors. Particularly good are the analyses of diplomatic situations, the different attitudes of parties and foreign Powers being excellently portrayed. The book's only noticeable defects arise from the reflexes of the author's own temperament. Obviously a man of strong feelings, Mr. Hibben seems occasionally to be slightly carried away by them. He makes no secret of his warm admiration for King Constantine, which sometimes appears to verge on hero-worship, while he equally does not disguise his cordial dislike to Mr. Venizelos. How-

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ever, Mr. Hibben's keen insight and professional training keep his sympathies from getting the better of his judgment, while his evident intellectual honesty preserves him from any propagandist distortion of facts.

Mr. Hibben is profoundly right when he says in his foreword: "The time has come when Greece is entitled to a hearing." His book is a telling witness in that hearing. It should be read by all who are interested in Greece and the Near East. LOTHROP STODDARD.

Modern British Poetry

Modern British Poetry, edited by Louis Untermeyer. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Howe.

IN a brief introduction to his anthology Mr. Untermeyer summarizes some seven "new influences and tendencies" that have emerged in English poetry since about 1885. The first of these is the decay of Victorianism and the growth of a purely decorative art, a movement of which Mr. Untermeyer makes Oscar Wilde the protagonist whereas the real revolt had flamed out in the sixties when a greater change appeared in aesthetic standards and codes than at any time since the Quantock coombs witnessed the rebirth of poetry at the end of the eighteenth century. Of Walter Pater, whose influence shaped not only Wilde's artistic creed, but the poetry of Dowson and Symons and Johnson, no word is said. In the nineties there came the rise and decline of the aesthetic philosophy and in his account of this "tendency" Mr. Untermeyer makes no mention of the large influence of French literature and taste. As a reaction from pale aestheticism there followed the sturdy red-blooded virility of William Ernest Henley; and here too the critic fails to trace the movement to its sources, for Henley and to a less degree his followers are disciples of George Meredith and of Mr. Blunt. The fourth phenomenon of the modern period was the Celtic Revival of which Mr. Untermeyer gives an acceptable sketch, without, however, linking it up with that larger development which is known as "regionalism." Mr. Kipling is the fifth tendency; and his verse is connected, ingeniously but not convincingly, with that of Synge by their common concern for "things hitherto regarded as too commonplace for poetry." Then follows Mr. Masefield; and lastly, the "Georgians" of our own day. So far as it goes this analysis is accurate and clear, but it leaves aside one of the major "tendencies" of the time: the expression of the imperialistic idea in poetry and the protest against it. In the poems selected Henley's strong imperialism does not appear and Kipling's is implicit only, while on the contrary Sir William Watson's "little Englandism" is not illustrated and (through an oversight) Mr. Blunt is not mentioned at all.

When it comes to the body of the book, the anthology itself, the reviewer confronts the proverbially indisputable subject. "If you do not like my nosegay," Mr. Untermeyer may quite reasonably say, "make one for yourself; the garden is large and fair." But what if the nosegay offered claims to be representative of the garden? Three considerations challenge the justice of such a claim in this case. The arrangement in chronological order, instead of by "schools" or "tendencies" (as in the introduction), results in such awkward juxtapositions as that of "A. E." between Ernest Dowson and Stephen Phillips. The disproportionate amount of space allotted to the various poets gives a false emphasis: Mr. Hardy, Mr. Bridges and Mr. Russell have each less than three pages, while Mr. Chesterton has nine and Mr. Kipling and Mr. Noyes (Mr. Noyes!) twelve each. And, even recognizing the strict limitations of a small volume, one is surprised at the omission of any samples of the work of P. B. Marston, John Payne, Eugene Lee-Hamilton, Richard Middleton, Herbert Trench, Gordon Bottomley, Maurice Hewlitt and Mary Coleridge. Particularly remarkable is the silence with which the work of Lee-Hamilton is passed over, for the wonderful sonnets of his later years and especially Mimma Bella (which the world is for the present almost ignorant of) will be remembered when the work certainly of some of the "younger men" to whom two-thirds of Mr. Untermeyer's volume is devoted, has passed into the limbo of "minor poetry." The anthologist is tolerant of many schools; but his eye is more on the present than on the immediate past.

This becomes even more apparent when one turns over the pages and considers the individual selections offered as representative of the several poets. For example, five poems by Mr. De la Mare are included; and in The Listeners and Old Susan we have admirable specimens of the best that he can accomplish in his two previous moods. Again, Ralph Hodgson has done nothing more delicate and delightful than Eve and Time, You Old Gipsy Man; and there is no evidence that Mr. Noyes will ever go further than the point he reached in Sherwood and The Barrel-Organ. Masefield, Drinkwater, Sassoon, Brooke, Sorley and others are fairly represented. The same cannot be said of the older men. What of Watson without A Child's Hair or The First Skylark in Spring or The Glimpse or any of the political poems? What of Thompson with no excerpt from the immortal Ode and without To the Dead Cardinal or The Kingdom of God? No one coming here upon Russell for the first time will gather any idea of the grave charm, the priestly solemnity, the mysterious insight of his moving verse. Turning to Henley we read the blatant Invictus but not What Have I Done For You, England, nor Where Forlorn Sunsets Flare and Fade, without which the real Henley hardly speaks. And who, in the meagre pages assigned to Mr. Hardy, will find even faint and partial indications of the scope and grandeur of his achievement in poetry?

S. C. C.

Lord Grey

Lord Grey of the Reform Bill, by G. M. Trevelyan. New York: Longmans Green and Company.

MR. TREVELYAN belongs to a great tradition; and he worthily maintains the dignity of a literary ancestry of which Macaulay is only the most eminent figure. Known wherever literature is cherished for his own superb study of Garibaldi, his Life of John Bright showed admirably that he was not less competent to illustrate the history of England. This latest work is not a whit less excellent. It is more than seventy years since the death of Lord Grey; and we are indeed fortunate that neither piety nor mishap stood in the way of his official life. It differs in many ways from the ordinary form of authorized biography. It is short, instead of long; it is not a strained eulogy of its subject; it does not preserve those scraps of undigested and irrelevant material which are the curse of English biographers; it has the proper historic perspective in the significance which it attaches to events. Lord Grey is a man of one great gesture. While it would be

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untrue to attribute to him alone the credit of the Reform Bill of 1832, to no other man is its achievement so completely due. Grey, whatever his defects, seems almost to have lived for the passage of this measure. That accomplished, he slipped out of politics with a quietness which later historians have found only less disconcerting than his contemporaries. He was in politics for nearly forty years, all but three of which were passed in the difficulties of opposition to a great statesman and a popular war. But he illumined in his career, perhaps better than any man of his time, what is meant by the Whig tradition; and in that aspect he has a special importance for the student of a great theory of life, the dimness of whose lustre now must not provoke us to a misunderstanding of its original worth.

The perspective in which Mr. Trevelyan sets him is that of Charles Fox's pupil; and it was to the maintenance of Fox's principles that Grey devoted his life. Not, indeed, that he always agreed with his great chief. It is clear enough that he felt more deeply the significance, even the splendor, of the French Revolution; and there is nothing of Fox's febrile opportunism about his eagerness for parliamentary reform. But Fox and Grey alike had a sense of the dawn of a new time which was concealed from their opponents. They resented the power of the Crown in national affairs. They dissented from the crusade of the propertied class against the ideals of 1789; and if they judged Napoleon too tenderly, it was at least because they had weighed the price of Pitt's harsher view. Nor did they fail to understand that the simple outlines of the English aristocratic system had become inadequate as a theory of government. Grey's case for parliamentary reform was not based on a system of rights, but on the knowledge that the middle class would not endure the inequities of rotten boroughs. He had no enthusiasm, he perhaps did not even understand the underlying temper of his age. But he did at least perceive that concessions are the price which a decaying creed must pay for its transformation; and he knew that to withhold concessions was the guarantee of revolution. It was to avert catastrophe that he stood upon the side of reform; and his balanced moderation stands out in significant contrast to the characteristically ignorant courage of the Duke of Wellington and the timid opportunism of Sir Robert Peel. Nor was he, be it remembered, a statesman by choice. On the contrary, he infinitely preferred a leisured ease at Howick to the heat and stress of parliamentary life. But he realized that without him the movement for reform would have been deprived of its fulcrum. No one else would have been able to exercise the same influence over the wavering mind of the King. No one else could have spoken with that authority which only forty years' devotion to an unpopular cause can confer. No one else, one is tempted to say, could have held together a party composed of elements so diverse. He represented the nice equipoise between what was revolution to the Tories and meagre conservatism to the radicals. That he was able to succeed is the best evidence of the immediate adequacy of the solution he proposed.

We shall miss the significance of Grey's achievement unless we in some sort measure the power of the opposition he had to face. He was legislating the great families out of control; and they were a consolidated system mightier than England had ever before seen. The church, the army and navy, the universities, the larger part of the press, were all at their disposal. They had the strength which comes from opposing ancient legal privilege to new demands of which the result cannot be foreseen. They had just emerged victorious from a tremendous struggle; and they would not lightly forego the prestige which victory confers. Nor was this all. The general temper of Toryism was relentlessly opposed to concessions. It accepted the full implications of Burke's extravagant eulogies upon the Constitution. The aristocracy believed it to be a divine creation, divergence at any point from which must involve destruction. They knew of the middle class only to resent it; if they knew that the workers existed, the substance of their lives did not, as Disraeli was magnificently to demonstrate, impinge upon the aristocratic consciousness. Life seemed a glorious pageant of magnificent county houses tempered by a short season in town. Foreign policy was the prerogative of their class; and the duty of the people was merely to die when so commanded. They did not have to contend even with the half-knowledge which modern popular education has conferred. No technique existed for transforming public opinion into statute. From Eton to Christ Church, from Christ Church for a year or two upon the continent, twenty years of genial club life in the House of Commons with the splendid relaxation of the Lords as a climax to one's career; the way was indeed straight to the most interesting type of life, the mingling of political eminence with social prestige. The Reform Act of 1832 obviously involved, at least ultimately, a term to that monopoly; and such prerogatives as these, based as they were upon a vast propertied system without corresponding function, men do not lightly surrender. There were, indeed, not a few who were willing to fight for them to the death; and the people were at that psychological disadvantage which centuries of subjection, with its insistence upon inferiority, inevitably breeds. That Grey could triumph over antagonism such as this is high tribute to the moral quality of his leadership.

But not only the aristocracy had to be encountered. Beyond the middle class whom Grey was prepared to enfranchise there lay the vast, but undiscovered country of the people. If Grey knew of its existence he did not realize its meaning. Of its inner life, the literature with which men like Hodgskin and Thompson were providing it, its eager response to the propaganda of Robert Owen, its anger at the new industrialism by which its ambitions were frustrated, we may be certain that he had no real understanding. He never, for instance, welcomed the aid of Francis Place, in some sort, as Mr. Wallas has taught us, the most gigantic because the most significant figure of his generation. There is no atom of suggestion that he ever appreciated the vast effort of Bentham or the propagandist value of his formulae. The struggle towards trade-union organization was for him little more than the inevitable turbulence of the working-class to which repression was the answer. The struggle of Ireland, under O'Connell, to be free, met with no sympathy from his hands; and his recognition of O'Connell's aid in the Reform struggle is scant and ungenerous. Political reform, that is to say, was for him, as for the Whigs without exception, entirely unrelated to the economic phenomena of the time. It was simply a specific against disorder, the redress of a balance which had become too obvious to be ignored.

Here, indeed, we reach the essence of the Whig doctrine. It had never the slightest appreciation of the value of human personality as such. The Whigs were too near the era when great property alone was held to confer

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the right to power to be able to appreciate the importance of giving humble interests their due protection in the state. There was, in fact, a penumbra of feudalism about Whig theories of the state which, consecrated in the writings of Burke as the source of beauty, deceived even so robust a mind as that of Macaulay. Whigs differed from Tories less in their conception of power than in their view of the extent to which exclusion could be maintained. They differed also in that whereas the Tories were inclined, as with Southey, to compensate the poor for political impotence by a not ill-meant paternalism, the Whig relation to nonconformity involved in this aspect acceptance of the new economics which Ricardo and Malthus had lately given to an awe-struck generation. In the result the question which Disraeli so aptly named the "condition of England" question was misunderstood by the Whigs and their descendants for almost fifty years. Only so can we explain the extraordinary blindness of Mr. Gladstone and of so staunch a modernist as Lord Morley to the significance of the thoughts that, a generation before their fruition, men like Dilke were urging upon their party. Even in our own day the tradition remains; and in the views of Mr. Asquith upon industrial organization its last traces may without difficulty be detected.

Yet, when the last word is said, the Whiggism of Grey was a tonic for his age. It averted civil war; and of the evils of that test no American needs to be convinced. Its central figure, as Mr. Trevelyan paints him, is a figure full of not a little of those loveable qualities which endeared his descendant, the late Governor-General of Canada, to friend and foe alike. He has integrity above all; that power to follow the truth within the limits of his vision which has made his collateral relative, Sir Edward Grey, so enviable a figure in English diplomacy. If we cannot recapture now the charm of that oratory which enchanted even so hostile a witness as Addington, at least we can admit the power it exerted. Nor is it difficult to realize the attractiveness of his temper. Equable, high-minded, a little cold, yet capable of great enthusiasms, reserved, yet at times, as in 1793, capable of a noble frankness, Grey is of the stuff by which England has stood erect amidst the calamities of dangerous transition. Less adorable than Fox, less majestic than Pitt, without the brilliance of Canning or the adaptability of Peel, he was yet more suited to the needs of his time than any other man who could then have directed it. That, after all, is the political quality which secures the most solid accomplishment.

H. J. L.

Ex Cathedra

A Lover of the Chair, by Sherlock Bronson Gass. Boston: Marshall Jones Company.

DOUBTLESS it is something of the same whim for rebellious challenge as that which prompted a certain review to style itself "Unpopular" that prompts Mr. Sherlock Bronson Gass to characterize his book as "a fling at the spirit of the age." Indeed the title of his series of essays, A Lover of the Chair, is but a subtle rebuff of that active, acquisitive, aggressive Americanism which is so strenuously of the hour and so little to Mr. Gass's taste. Perchance a stronger word than 'taste' ought to be used, for despite the friendly humor and gentleness of the essayist there is the iron of sharp experience and the steel of strong convictions to give point and edge to his critical depictions of men and manners. Formally, the book is made up of impressions of the passing show—politics, art, thought,—from the quiet of an observer's chair; but intentionally, surely, its gospel is from a seat of authority.

For, much as the author might disclaim it, there is a gospel: foremost, a grief that is indeed an indignation with the platitudes and shallowness that make up American college education; deeper, a grief that is a humiliation from the shallowness and platitudes of what we call our intellectual life; and finally, an inward fatalism which is the sense of duty imposed by the scholar's conscience. This last, is the salvation—a hard salvation, as is shown by the author's own veiled confession; for, as in all essentially thoughtful books, there is a life behind the screen of the pages.

Part Two is, in fact, the whimsical and serious sketch of that life. It begins with a playfully ironical retrospection of the bereavement of Sir John Evelyn over "poor Richard" who died at "5 yeares and 3 dayes onely . . . a prodigy of wit and understanding," with four languages, a prodigious number of verses and parts of plays, and Biblical history all in the assessment of his learning. The case is drawn only that the contrast with our own directionless upbringings may show the more pointed: after all, was Sir John's sorrow wholly without point? . . . What comes of our own happy-go-lucky rearing of the young—especially of the sensitively eager—is indicated later on. In the "awkward age," so runs the discourse, "he was on his way to add one more to that modern army of vagabonds who wander picturesquely over the broad highway of letters, revealing their soul's adventures with a mountebank's shameless facility and accorded a happy parasitic living by a public eager to be amused and flattered." This is Mr. Gass's estimate of his book-making fellows, to which is added the critical codicil: "Romanticism, he knew in a later period when he had had the advantages of a completer aloofness and the keener irony of maturity was but the natural philosophy of adolescence." His own escape, the accident of temperament perhaps, came from his self-discovery of "a passion for the general in an age of the particular, and for the humane and moral in an age of the physical."

In certain American atmospheres such judgments will be jauntily dismissed as priggishness and cant, or as harking back to dead moralities. The social chime of many voices makes this easy; it is in the temper of the time for us to take free emotion for serious judgment. But are we indeed centrally justified? Is there no age-lasting quiet beyond the din? Or, to put the question within our own hemisphere, has American Puritanism no living and lineal descendant? For Mr. Gass, at least, there is an inevadable law—Puritanic, grim: "He saw now still more clearly the distinction for which he had groped so blindly in his fruitless college days—that the spiritual structure was that slow accumulation of wisdom which men had so painfully been building through the ages—an intangible structure which nature ignored, which lived outside of nature, and which would vanish save for its voluntary, painful re-creation by those who mastered it anew. It dwelt nowhere but in men's minds, and dwelt there only by perpetual conscious re-mastery."

America is a land of many broad miles, wide-peopled. Its capitals build slowly, but they also must be many and interspaced by many leagues. Mr. Gass is a man of the middle lands, the river-drained lands, and the life that he sees is the life of the towns and cities of the bosom of the

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continent; New England and New York might be non-existent so far as his book-consciousness goes. There is a certain title to readability in this one fact. His is not a voice of the hour; but it is mid-continentally American; it is persistent; it will one day be heeded where the capitals are building.

H. A.

An Imperfect Mother, by J. D. Beresford. New York: The Macmillan Company.

A TOUCH of psychoanalysis in a novel ordinarily implies a set of more or less abnormal characters, preferably neurotic artists and authors. The significance of Mr. Beresford's plot depends upon the hero's subconscious recollection of an incident in childhood, when his mother gave way to hysterical laughter. This laughter recurs twice in crises of his life, and each time fills him with shivering, inexplicable horror. Yet no one could be more normal, in the accepted sense of the word, than Stephen Kirkwood. He is an engineer, who wins his employer's favor by skill and diligence. Nothing could be more commonplace and respectable than his ideal of life:

"He wanted some one all his own, to whom he could be the essential person in life; some one for whom he in turn could work; whom he could make happy. Then later there would be his children to live and work for. He would like to have children of his own, several children; and they should have opportunities that had been denied to him. He could find satisfaction in making money, if he could spend it on making his wife and children happy."

And, if Stephen is normal to the point of being sometimes dull, Margaret Weatherley, the girl for whom he cherishes an exalted passion originating in his school days, is perhaps even more so. She is a lighthearted little butterfly, an accomplished flirt, with a latent capacity for genuine sentimental affection that makes her, presumably, an excellent wife for Stephen. Cecilia, Stephen's mother, is made of more original stuff. Married to a mediocre, insignificant bookseller, who timidly idolizes her, she defies the rigid propriety standards of an English provincial town by running away with the cathedral organist. It is her personality, imperious, voluptuous, constantly demanding applause, extremely sensitive alike to criticism and to sympathy, that unmistakably dominates the book. And it is her keen perception, combined with a certain measured generosity, that brings Stephen and Margaret together after the man's intense seriousness and the girl's nervous coquetry have created an apparently insuperable barrier between them.

Aside from the creation of Cecilia, Mr. Beresford builds up a very interesting story out of rather unpromising materials. There are only a few dramatic passages in the novel: Stephen's passionate remonstrances with his mother as she goes away with the organist; two scenes between Stephen and Margaret; and the very finely written chapter in which Cecilia, perceiving that she has lost the first place in her son's devotion, displays enough magnanimity to help him in his love affair. The narrow, backbiting stupidity of the provincial town has been satirized, gently or savagely, by English novelists of every age. Beresford handles this theme extremely well. He describes the complacent, circumscribed, gossiping life of the villagers with wry, demure humor. One suspects that he strongly sympathizes with Cecilia when she openly challenges Mrs. Grundy, as personified in her acutely self-righteous and small-minded sister-in-law.

An Imperfect Mother is certainly one of the best of the recent English novels. It is free from the war preoccupation that has exerted such an unfavorable influence upon English and American literature alike. It handles a series of controversial emotional situations without a trace of moralizing or partisanship. Beresford's psychological insight is clear and unwarped. Yet he is free from that pedantry of realism that leads some authors to lose themselves in a maze of unimportant details. His rapid, flexible style imparts peculiar charm to his conversations. And the author never feels constrained to beat a figurative tomtom, to direct attention to himself by resorting to self-conscious eccentricity of expression. He is secure in the consciousness of a ripe and finely developed art.

W. H. C.

Nowadays, by Lord Dunsany. Boston: The Four Seas Company.

LORD DUNSANY returned from his third hemisphere, that mystical region where the laughter of the gods was so sardonic and where the golden doom was written by a child, to judge the world wherein he existed. Nowadays is a short essay but it contains the quintessence of the poet's protest against the false life of the day that appears to have engulfed the old ideals. Dunsany looks about him, at flaring quack advertisements, the ravenous path of progress, the snobs, the pretenders, the pursuers of wealth, the machine-mad multitude, and declares that the earth has been perverted from its true path. There are only two ways of understanding life, he affirms. One is to find some ancient folk and borrow from the storehouse of their wisdom, and the other way is to turn to the poets. The poets, he believes, are the true saviors of the race. "For what is it to be a poet?" he cries. "It is to see at a glance the glory of the world, to see beauty in all its forms and manifestations, to feel ugliness like a pain, to resent the wrongs of others as bitterly as one's own, to know mankind as others know single men, to know nature as botanists know a flower, to be thought a fool, to hear at moments the clear voice of God." There is nothing new in his essay; it is as old as poetry itself. But it brings back in new language those old things that so many of us have either forgotten or lost sight of in the restless sea of modern life.

H. S. G.

A Correction

A History of the Theatre in America reviewed in our issue of September 1st, page 23, should have been credited to J. B. Lippincott and Company, Philadelphia.

Contributors

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JOHN MIDDLETON MURRY, editor of the London Athenaeum, has recently published The Evolution of an Intellectual.

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